

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Holy Jesus.

CONTAINING,
A Brief Account of the BIRTH and
LIFE, the Death, Resurrection, and Ascen-
sion of Our Blessed SAVIOUR: And of the
Prophecies, Predictions, and Prodigies, rela-
ting to him; Recorded both in Holy Writ
and other Gentile Authors.

To which is added,
The LIVES and DEATHS
OF THE
Holy *Evangelists* and *Apostles*

Collected from the *Holy Scriptures*; the
Writings of the Ancient Fathers, and other
Authors of undoubted Verity.

Dedicated to Her Majesty Queen ANNE.

Enlivened with Pictures.

The Tenth Edition Corrected.

By WILLIAM SMITH, A. M.

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TO

Her most Excellent MAJESTY,

A N N E,

QUEEN

OF

*Great Britain, France, and Ireland,
Defender of the Faith, &c.*

Most Gracious Sovereign,

YOUR Majesty's Royal Proclamation
for the Encouragement of True Re-
ligion and Vertue, and for the Sup-
pressing of Vice, Immorality, and Prophaneness,
are such Glorious Beams of Piety Streaming
from Your Royal Heart, as raises in all Your
Faithful and Loyal People the Highest Ex-
pectations of all Spiritual and Temporal Bles-
sings from the future Reign of so Good and Gra-
cious a Princess, who, in their several Pla-
ces and Stations, Daily offer to God, by whom
Kings and Queens Reign, their Sacrifice of
Prayer

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Prayer for the Preservation of Your Sacred Person from all Dangers, and the Establishment of Your Throne against all Pretenders and Opposers whatsoever. And that he would make Your Reign Long and Prosperous, and so direct Your Councils, and succeed Your Armies and Allies, that You may overcome all your Enemies, and at length obtain a Crown of Immortal Life and Glory.

Great Princess! This exalted Goodness has embolden'd one of the meanest of Your Majesty's Subjects, humbly to present this small Offering to Your Royal Hands; as being assured, that whatsoever may tend to the Honour of the Author, and Promulgators of our Holy Religion, will not be unacceptable to Your Majesty, and particularly this brief Account of the holy Lives and Acts of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, wherein I hope there are some Convincing Arguments to disprove the impious Opinions of those that deny the Divinity of our Sacred Redeemer. I humbly beg Your Majesty's Gracious Pardon for my Presumption; who am

Your Majesty's

Most Loyal Subject,

William Smith

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Holy JESUS,

CONTAINING

A Brief Account of the Birth, and Life, the
Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of our
BLESSED SAVIOUR.

AMONG the many vile Opinions advanced by Men of Corrupt Minds in this last and worst Age of the World, none has been more Impious (next to the denying of the Being of God) than the denying the Divinity and God-head of our Blessed Saviour, by those Men who seem to disown Atheism, and pretend to own the Authority of the Holy Scripture. It may therefore be very necessary, before we proceed farther, to advance some cogent Arguments in Defence of the God-head of our holy Redeemer.

St. Peter, in his Discourse to the High-Priest and Rulers of the Jews, *Acts 4*. asserts, That *there is no Salvation in any other but in Jesus of Nazareth, & that there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* If it be objected by the Deists, that there were many Saints under the Law of

Moses for Two Thousand Years together, who without Christian Religion served God Uprightly, as the *Prophets* and other Holy People: And before them again in the Law of Nature, when neither *Jew* nor *Christian* Religion was ever heard of, till about Two Thousand Years after, several Holy Men pleased God, and served him Truly, as *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Job*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, and others.

I answer, That though these Men, especially the latter, had not so particularly an express Knowledge of *Christ*, and of his Mysteries, as we have now; for this was reserved till *the fullness of Time come*, & was then revealed to the Holy *Prophets* and *Apostles* by the Spirit: And though they did not know, expressly, how and in what manner *Christ* should be Born, whether of a Virgin, or how he should Live and Die; what Sacraments he should leave; what Way of publishing his Gospel he should appoint, &c. Whereof yet many Particulars were revealed to the *Jews* at sundry times, and the nearer *Christ's* coming approached, they had more clear Revelation of them; yet all, and every one of those Holy *Saints* that lived from *Abraham* to the coming of *Christ*, had a general Knowledge of the Christian Religion, and did certainly believe there should come a Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind, to deliver them from the Bondage contracted by the Sin of *Adam*: And this was declared to our first Parents in Paradise, That *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpents Head*: And therefore St. *John*, in the Revelations, calls *Christ*, *the Lamb of God which was slain from the Foundation of the World*. And the *Apostles Peter* and *Paul* affirm, That the Ancient Fathers before *Christ's* Nativity were saved by Faith in him. And it is agreed by most Divines, that their Religion was the very same in substance with ours, only more obscure and general, as relating to things to come, whereas we believe
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in those that are past and present, they believed a Redeemer should come, and that a Virgin should Conceive: We believe that he is come, and that she hath Conceived. They had Sacrifices and Ceremonies, that prefigur'd his Coming; we have Sacraments that represent his Presence with us in the Administration thereof. They called their Redeemer *the Desire, or Expectation, of all Nations*; We the Salvation of all Nations. Finally, there was no other Difference between the Faith of good Men of Old, and ours, but in the Circumstances of Time, and the Clearness and Particularity thereof. So that it is manifest, it was necessary for all Persons and People, from the Beginning of the World, who desir'd the Salvation of their Souls, to believe in *Christ*, and to love him with all their Hearts and Souls, by this it appears, that *Jesus Christ* was the Saviour and Redeemer of all Mankind, fore-promised and expected from the Beginning of the World.

We shall now further demonstrate, that he was the Only Son of God, and God himself, and consequently that his *Religion* and *Precepts* are True and Sincere, and our Obedience thereunto is the only Way to everlasting Happiness. In Prosecution of which, three Things may be consider'd in the order of Time wherein they happen'd. 1. What pass'd before the Nativity of *Christ*. 2. What Things were done and verifi'd after his Incarnation to his Ascension, all the while he abode on Earth. 3. What Events ensued for Confirming his Deity after his Departure.

1. Those Things which pass'd before his Nativity, and are Proofs of the Verity of Christianity, may be taken partly from the *Jews*, and partly from the *Gentiles*, he being appointed from the Beginning to work the Redemption of them both, and make them both one People in the Service of his Father; and therefore several Fore-warnings were given to both, for Stirring them up to expect his Coming.

As to the *Jews* the Old Testament which we have receiv'd from that Nation, who are profess'd Enemies of the Lord *Jesus* and his Doctrines, was written so many Years before the Name of Christianity was known to the World, that it can't be suppos'd they were partial, and therefore their Authority is very strenuous in confirming the Truth of our Religion. For it cannot be deny'd, but that throughout the whole Course and Body of the *Old Testament*, they had *Messias* promised to them, which is the same that we call Christ; that is, a Person Anointed, and sent from God, a Redeemer, a Pacifier of God's Wrath, a Mediator between God and Man, a Satisfier for the Sins and Offences of the whole World, a Restorer of our Innocency lost in Paradise, a Master, an Instructor, a Law-giver, a spiritual and eternal King, that should Rule and Reign in our Hearts to conquer the Power and Tyranny of *Satan*, the Enemy of Mankind, who betray'd our first Parent in Paradise, and never ceaseth since to assault us with his Temptations. This is evident by the Covenant God made with *Adam*, saying, *In the Day thou eatest of the Tree of Knowledge, of Good and Evil, thou shalt dye*, Gen. 2. Which Covenant being broken by *Adam*, he received his Judgment, but with a gracious Promise, that *the seed of the Woman* should conquer Death and Sin, and shall tread the Temptations of the Devil under his Feet, and this was Christ the *Messias* of the World, as the Eldest *Jews* and *Rabbins* understood this very Place, (whatever the latter have dream'd, that their *Messias* should be a Temporal King) and the Old *Chaldaick* Paraphrase expounds these Words thus: ' *Adam and Eve*
' have a certain and present Remedy against thee, O
' Devil, for the time shall come when they shall tread
' thee down with their Heels, by the Help of the
' *Messias*, who shall be their King.

The very same Promise is seven times Repeated and Establish'd to *Abraham*, who lived near twothou-

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stand Years after *Adam*, and again to *Isaac* his Son after him, *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*, which had been no great Benediction to *Abraham*, or to the *Jews* after him, who never saw the *Messias* actually, if he had been only a Temporal King; and much less to the *Gentiles*, and all other Nations, if this *Jewish Messias* was to have been a Worldly Monarch, who was to destroy and subdue all Nations, and bring them into Subjection to the *Jews*, as their late *Rabbins* affirm.

The Patriarch *Jacob* prophesieth more plainly of *Christ* in his Blessing upon *Judah*, Gen 46. *The Scepter, or Government, shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come, and to him shall be the gathering of the People. Or, until he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the Expectation of Nations.* The *Chaldaick* reads it, and interprets it thus: 'Until *Christ*, or the *Messias* come, 'who is the Hope and Expectation of all Nations, as 'well *Gentiles*, as of us that are *Jews*, the Government shall not cease in the House, or Tribe of *Judah*. From which we infer, That if he be the Hope and Expectation of the *Gentiles*, then he cannot be a Temporal King to destroy them, as the late *Jews* would have it; but a Spiritual King, to bring in Subjection their Spiritual Enemies, that is, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, as all true *Christians* do believe. And again, if the Temporal Kingdom of the House of *Judah*, of which *Christ* must come, shall cease and be destroy'd at the Coming of the *Messias*, as the Scripture affirms, how can the *Jews* expect a Temporal King for their *Messias*, as they fondly do?

But to leave this Controversy with the latter *Rabbins*; we find little Recorded of the Doings of the *Jews*, during their Four Hundred Years Bondage in *Egypt*. Yet that Nation have a Tradition, that as soon as they came out, and were got into the Desert, going to the Land of Promise, the Three Sons of *Korah*

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call'd *Assir*, *Elkana*, and *Abiasaph*, mention'd *Exod. 6.* and in other Places, compos'd divers Songs and Psalms in the Praise and Expectation of the *Messias* to come, and that the holy Men of those Times did solace themselves with singing the same, that King *David* collect-ed most of those Ancient Songs together, and that they now comprehend all the Psalms from the Forty First, to the Eighty Seventh, as they now stand.

Moses, who liv'd among the *Israelites*, and was their Leader thro' the Wilderness, had a clear Revelation of the *Messias* from the Almighty, *Deut. 18.* *I will raise up a Prophet to this People from among their Brethren, like unto thee, and will put my Words in his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, and whosoever shall not hearken to my Words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him;* which cannot be understood of any but *Jesus Christ*, since the Holy Ghost positively affirms, *There arose not a Prophet in Israel like unto Moses, &c.*

About 400 Years after his Death, *David*, an holy Man, and the first King of this House of *Judah*, out of whose Lineage the *Messias* was to come, had this Mystery more manifestly reveal'd than to any other before him; and first, God assures him, That *Christ* should be born of this Stock, *Psalms 89.* *Once have I sworn in my Holiness, that I will not lye unto David, His Seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me, it shall be establish'd for ever as the Moon, &c. as a faithful Witness in Heaven.* Which Words, tho' they are apply'd by the latter *Jews* to King *Solomon*, who was in some Sense a Type of *Christ*; yet those Expressions of his Kingdom enduring for ever, in this and other Scriptures, can never be intended of *Solomon*, whose Earthly Kingdom was rent and divided by *Jeroboam* soon after his Death; but must necessarily be understood of an Eternal King, who should come of *David's* Seed, as well as those Words in *Psalms 2.* *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee, I will*

give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession. Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in Pieces like a Potter's Vessel, &c. And again, Psalm 72. which is entituled, a Psalm for Solomon, 'tis said, *They shall fear him as long as the Sun and Moon endures, throughout all Generations. He shall have Dominion also from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the Ends of the Earth. All Kings shall fall down before him, all Nations shall serve him. He shall spare the Poor and Needy, and save the Souls of the Needy. His Name shall endure for ever, and shall be continued as long as the Sun, and Men shall be blessed in him, and all Nations shall call him Blessed.* These Passages, tho' it be entitl'd, a Psalm for Solomon, must be mean'd of Christ's Eternal Kingdom, of his Universal Reign over Jew and Gentile, of his being adored by all Nations, of Saving the Souls of the Needy, and finally, that all the Tribes of the Earth shall be Blessed in him; and cannot possibly be meant of any Temporal King that ever was among the Jews, or ever shall be to the End of the World, but only of Christ Jesus our Lord.

This Promise made to David, that Christ should come of his Seed, is repeated about 400 Years after by many Prophets, and confirmed by God, as in Jeremiah 23. *Behold the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, & a King shall Reign and Prosper, and shall execute Justice and Judgment in the Earth. In his Days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is the Name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* Which is a farther Evidence that the Promises and Expressions aforementioned, were not applicable to David nor Solomon, nor any Temporal King of David's Line, but only to Christ, who is particularly called, *The Son and Offspring of David*, the first King of the Tribe of Judah, and Progenitor in the Flesh, who likewise was a Figure of Christ in several Respects.

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The *Messias* is likewise call'd by the Name of *David* himself, by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ch. 34. I will save my flock, and they shall be no more a Prey! And I will set up one shepherd over them, & he shall feed them, even my servant *David*, he shall feed them, & shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant *David* a Prince among them, & I will make with them a covenant of Peace: In which words, not only we Christians, but the latter *Jews* also, in their *Talmud*, acknowledge, that the *Messias* is call'd by the Name of *David*, because he must descend from his seed; for King *David* being dead four Hundred Years before this, it was impossible that he himself should now come again to Feed or Govern the People of God.

The Prophet *Isaiah*, who liv'd about 100 Years before *Jeremiah* or *Ezekiel*, had a very clear understanding of the *Messias*, & his Affairs, which he describeth particularly, ch. 2. And it shall come to pass, in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's House shall be establish'd in the top of the Mountains, & shall be exalted above the Hills, and all Nations shall flow unto it. And many People shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he shall teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths; for out of *Zion* shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from *Jerusalem*, and he shall judge among the Nations, and rebuke many People. Which very Passage is repeated *Micah* 4. and is apply'd in both Places to the *Messias*, the *Jews* & *Hebrews* themselves confessing that they can have no other meaning. And *Isaiah* prosecutes the same Matters in divers other Places, as in Chap. 4. speaking of the *Messias*, whom he had before nam'd, The Mountain of the Lord's House, he adds, *In that Day shall the Branch of the Lord be Beautiful and Glorious, and the Fruit of the Earth excellent and comely, for them that have escaped of Israel.* Which Expressions of the *Branch of the Lord*, and *Fruit of the Earth* are under-

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stood to signifie the Twofold Nature of Christ, who was both God and Man: And in Chap. 9. this Prophet calleth him, *Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* And in Chap. 11. he is still more perspicuous. *And there shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his Roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the Lord. He shall not judge after the Sight of his Eyes, neither reprove after the Hearing of his Ears, but with Righteousness shall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity for the Meek of the Earth, and he shall smite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips shall he slay the Wicked. And Righteousness shall be the Girdle of his Loyns, and Faithfulness the Girdle of his Reins.* Which Expression of the Stem of Jesse, the Father of David, is allow'd to intend the Virgin Mary, who descended directly from the Line of Jesse, and by the Rod and Branch, Christ is to be understood, who was born of her, and had all those Excellencies and Priviledges above other Men, which are here assign'd to him, whose farther Graces and Divine Properties the same Prophet expresth more particularly in Ch. 22. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth! I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles, he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the Street. He shall bring forth Judgment unto Victory. He shall be a Covenant to the People, a Light to the Gentiles. To open the blind Eyes, to bring forth the Prisoners from the Prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the Prison-House.* And the 52d and 53d Chapters of this Prophecy give a plain Account of Christ the Messiah, who perswaded the Church to believe his free Redemption, to receive the Ministers thereof, to joy in the Power thereof, and to free themselves from Bondage, and that his Kingdom shall

be exalted. The Prophet likewise complains of the People's Incredulity, executeth the Scandal of the Cross of *Christ* by the Benefit of his Passion, and the good Success thereof, &c.

Now, without alledging any more Prophecies, which are numerous throughout the *Old Testament*, I shall conclude with that of *Daniel*. This Prophet liv'd in the End of the Captivity of *Babylon*, a little before *Hugga*, *Zachariah*, and *Malachi*, who were the last Prophets that flourish'd among the *Jews*, almost Five Hundred Years before the Nativity of *Christ*. He reported of himself, *Chap. 9*. That being in *Babylon*, & having set his Face under the Lord God to seek by Prayer and Supplications, with Fasting, and Sackcloth and Ashes, the Angel *Gabriel* came unto him at the Time of the Evening Oblation, and foretold him, not only the sudden Deliverance of the People of *Israel* from the Captivity of *Babylon*, the Seventy Years of their Punishment, spoken of by the Prophet *Jeremy*, being accomplished; but likewise declar'd, that the Universal Freedom of Mankind from the Bondage and Captivity of Sin was not shortned; made up the just Time that pass'd from the Rebuilding of *Jerusalem*, after their deliverance from *Babylon*, unto the Birth of *Christ*, there should be Born the Saviour of the World, who should be put to Death for the Redemption of Mankind, whom he calls, *The most Holy, and the Messiah the Prince who should be cut off, but not for himself: To finish the Transgression; To make an End of Sins, to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in Everlasting Righteousness, &c.* So that it is very apparent, the whole *Old Testament* principally tendeth to foretell and manifest *Jesus Christ*, by Signs, Figures, Parables and Prophecies; and was written for this very End; which sufficiently demonstrates the Truth of our first Consideration, that the *Jews*, from Age to Age, were plainly inform'd of the Spirituality and Eternity of the Kingdom of *Christ*.

As to the second Consideration concerning the Person of *Christ*, and the Godhead of the promised *Messiah*: To this the Ancient *Jews* did agree, tho' the latter *Rabbins* deny the same, and affirm, That we attribute many things unto *Jesus*, that were not foretold of the *Messiah* to come, and among others, that he should be God, and the Son of God, and the Second Person in the Trinity; and we may with sorrow observe, that some who profess themselves Christians, as we have said, do at this very Day assert the same thing, who yet pretend not to deny the Authority of the Sacred Records, tho' herein they declare themselves ignorant of what is contained in them.

For it is evident, from the Writings of most of the holy Prophets afore-mention'd, that *Christ*, the *Messias*, must be God, and the Son of God, endu'd with Man's Nature, that is, both God and Man; so, in *Gen. 3.* where he is call'd *the Seed of the Woman*, it is manifest that he shall be a Man: And who crush'd the Old *Serpent*, the *Devil*, and bruise his Head, but God alone? And in *Isaiah 4.* where he is called, *The Branch of the Lord*, and *the Fruit of the Earth*; That his Kingdom shall be everlasting, that none can tell his Generation, that he shall sit at God's Right Hand. What can these and many more Passages to the like effect signify, but to declare the two Natures in *Christ*? And three of our Evangelists Record, that our Saviour put to silence several of the most Learned of the *Pharises*, with those Words of the *Psalms 110.* *The Lord said unto my Lord sit thou on my Right Hand until I make thine Enemies thy Foot-stool.* For, said *Jesus*, if *David* call him *Lord*, how is he then his Son? And no Man after that durst ask him any more Questions. Intimating hereby, that tho' the *Messiah* was to be *David's* Son according to his Manhood, yet according to his Godhead, he was to be *David's* Lord; and so several Learned *Jewish Rabbins* interpret this Place. And the Prophet *Micah* is plain, *Chap. 5.* *And thou Bethlehem Ephrata, tho' thou*

thou be little among the Thousands of Israel, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is, to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of Old, from Everlasting. Now this can never be understood of any Mortal Man that ever was, or shall be upon Earth. The Prophet *Isaiah* goes farther, Ch. 9. where he saith, Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulders, and his Name shall be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father. And the *Psalmist*, speaking of the *Messias*, *Isa.* 45, says, Thou art fairer than the Children of Men, thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the Scepter of thy Kingdom is a Right Scepter, &c. So that the *Messias* is call'd God twice in these Places, by the Name of *Elohim*; which I confess is sometimes, tho' very seldom, attributed to Creatures. Therefore to take away this small Refuge, it is apparent, that the Name *Jehovah* (which is peculiar to God alone, and so tremendous among the *Jews*, that they dare not pronounce it, and instead thereof read *Adonia*) is given to *Christ Jesus* in several Scriptures, particularly in *Jeremiah* 23. and 33. Chap. Behold, I will raise unto David a King, and this is his Name whereby he shall be call'd, **JEHOVAH, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**: And the like in *Zephania*, 9. 3. And the most famous *Hebrew* Expositors do acknowledge, that in these Scriptures *Jehovah* signifieth only the *Messias*, and that he was to be really God and Man.

Finally, *Philo*, a very Learned *Jew*, who liv'd in the time when *Christ* was upon Earth, and was twice sent Ambassador to *Rome*, in behalf of some of his Nation banish'd to *Alexandria*, in the 15th Year of the Emperor *Tiberius*, which was three Years before the Death of *Christ*, and the very same Year that he was Baptiz'd by *St. John*. This Man writ an Ingenious Book in behalf of his Countrymen, wherein are these Words: 'It is hard to determine what time is appointed for the return of us banish'd *Jews*, for there

is a Tradition that we must expect the Death of an High-Priest, of which some die quickly, and others live longer: But I am of Opinion, that this High-Priest shall be the very WORD of GOD, who shall be void of all Sin, whose Father, be God, and this Word shall be that Father's Wisdom, by which all things in the World were Created, His Head shall be anointed with Oyl, and his Kingdom shall flourish for ever and ever: Thus writ this Jew, when he little imagin'd that this very High-Priest, whom he expected, and this Word of God, which he describes, was now already come into the World.

In the next place, Let us consider what Authority this *Messias* was to have when he came upon Earth, and whether he should change and abrogate the Law of *Moses*, which the *Jews* deny he had Power to do. We that are Christians, hold with *St. Paul* in *Galatians*, &c. That the Law was given to the *Jews* but for a time, and that its outward Signs and Ceremonies, the greatest part whereof typified the *Messias* to come, was their *School-master to bring them unto Christ, and made nothing perfect*; being very burthensome to them for the multitude of Observances, consisting principally in external Performances, and so a Carnal and Servile Law: A Law of Terrour and Fear more than of Love and the Spirit of Liberty: A Law of Signs and Figures, and consequently to cease when the Things signify'd were come: A Law peculiar to, and proper for the *Jews*, and to be exercis'd in *Judea* alone, and that only in one City, namely *Jerusalem*, whither every Man was oblig'd to repair, in Person, three times a Year, and to offer Sacrifices there, and in no other Country or Place besides, and therefore would not serve when the *Messias* came, who was to be King as well of the *Gentiles* as the *Jews*, nor be a Ruler to all the People in the World that should believe in him; for how could the Men repair thrice a Year, and the Women for their Purification after every Child-birth,

to *Jerusalem*, who dwelt in *England*, or the *East* or *West-Indies*, as by the Law of *Moses* they were commanded to do. So that it is most evident, as we have said, that this Law, as the Apostle says, *Was but the Bringing in of a better Hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God*: And was but an Entertainment to the People of *Israel*, to preserve them from the Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, who were much subject thereto, 'till *Christ* should come and ordain a perfect Law, a Law of Love and Liberty, that should be common to all Men, and necessary for all Countries, Times, Places, and Persons; that should be written upon our Hearts, and should be easy, plain, full and clear, to the Unlearned as well as the Learned, to the Poor as well as the Rich; In brief, a Law that should chiefly consist in Good-Will, Beneficence, and Charity.

And this *Moses* signify'd to his People after he had deliver'd the former Law to them in *Deuteronomy* 18. when he said, *The Lord their God shall raise up a Prophet among their Brethren like unto him, unto whom they should hearken*; as tho' he said, You shall hear me till he come, who must be a Law-Giver like my self, but of a more perfect Law, and therefore more carefully to be heard and obey'd. And he adds, *That whosoever should not hearken to the Words which he should speak in his Name, God would require it of him*. And *Isaiah* prophecy'd more plainly, *Cha. 2. Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem*. Which cannot be understood of *Moses's* Law, which was Published Eight Hundred Years before from Mount *Sinai*. But *Christ's* Law was first promulgated from *Sion* and *Jerusalem*, and from thence spread Abroad throughout the World. And the Prophet *Malachi* tells the *Jews*, *Chap. 1. That God had no Pleasure in them, nor in their Sacrifices, but that, from the Rising of the Sun to its going down, his Name should be great among the Gentiles, and in every Place Incense and a pure Offering should be offer'd*

to his Name which should be great among the Hea-
then; which intimates a Reprobation of the *Jewish*
Sacrifices, and consequently of the Law of *Moses*,
which consisted principally therein: And that among
the *Gentiles* there should be a pure manner of Sacri-
fice more acceptable to God than the other, and
which might be performed in every place of the
World, and not to be tyed in one Country only, as the
Mosaical Law, & Sacrifices was: And finally God him-
self declares concerning the same in *Ezekiel*, Ch. 20. *I*
gave them Statutes that were not good, and Judgments
whereby they should not live. That is, they were not good
to be observ'd perpetually, nor should they live in 'em
for ever; but till the time that he had appointed,
which is particularly determin'd in *Jer.* 31. *Behold the*
days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Cove-
nant with the House of Israel and Judah, not according
to that of the Fathers, when I brought them out of E-
gypt: Whereby 'tis manifest, that at the coming of
Christ into the World, of whom, and of his Birth, he
speaks at large in this Chapter, there shall be a New
Testament, and Law different from the Old, given to
the Israelites at their coming out of Egypt. From all
that hath been said, it appears that in all Ages it was
foretold and promised that Christ should be God as
well as Man, and should have power to alter the Law
of *Moses*, which was to continue but for a time, and
to establish a *new and better Covenant* that should en-
dure for ever.

Now though this may be sufficient to establish any
Man's Faith therein, yet for the further confirming
thereof, the Holy Scriptures foretell every particular
Act, Accident and Circumstance of Importance that shall
happen concerning the Coming, Incarnation, Birth,
Life, Death, and Resurrection of the *Messiah*. As for
Example, the particular time and season wherein he
should appear, in *Gen.* 9. 11. That he should be born
of a Virgin, *Isaiah* 7. 24. *Behold a Virgin shall conceive*
and

The History of the

and bear a Son, That he should be born in *Bethlehem*, *Micah 5. 1.* aforemention'd. That at his Birth, all the Infants round about *Berblehem* should be slain for his sake, *Jer. 31. 15.* *A Voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation and bitter Weeping, Rachel Weeping for her Children, refus'd to be comforted, because they were not.* That the King of the *East* should come to adore and offer Gifts to him, *Psalms 72. 10.* *The King of Tarshish and the Isles shall bring presents. The Kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer Gifts.* That he should be presented by his Mother in the Temple of *Jerusalem*, *Mal. 3. 1.* *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple.* That he should fly into *Egypt*, and be called thence, *Hosea 11. 1.* *I called my Son out of Egypt.* That *John Baptist* should go before him, *Isaiah 40. 2.* *The Voice of him that cryeth in the Wilderness, prepare ye the Way of the Lord, &c.* *Mal. 3. 1.* *Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the Way before me.*

After this, that *Christ* should begin his Preaching with all Humanity and Quietness, *Isa. 42. 2.* *He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his Voice to be heard in the Street.* That he should do wonderful Miracles, and heal all Diseases, *Isa. 35. 5.* *Behold, your God will come and save you; then the Eyes of the Blind shall be open'd, and the Ears of the Deaf shall be unstopp'd; then shall the Lame leap like as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing.* *Isa. 60. 2.* *The Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the Meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, & the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound.* That he should dye for the Sins of the World, *Dan. 9.* *And the Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. To finish the Transgression, to make an End of Sins, and to make a Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in Everlasting Righteousness.* That he should be betray'd of his own Disciple, *Psalms 41. 9.* *Mine own familiar Friend, in whom I trusted, hath lift up his Heel against me, Psal. 55. 14.* For it was

not

not an Enemy that reproached me, but thou, O Man, mine Equal, my Guide, and my Acquaintance. That he should be sold for Thirty Pieces of Silver, *Zecha. 11. 12.* If ye think good, give me my Price; and if not, forbear; so they weighed for my Price 30 Pieces of Silver. That they should buy the Potter's Field with the Money, *ver. 13.* And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the Potter, a goodly Price that I was prized at of them. That he should ride to Jerusalem upon an Ass, *Zech. 9. 9.* Rejoyce, O Daughter of Zion and Jerusalem. Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is Just, and having Salvation, Lowly, and Riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Fole of an Ass. That the Jews should bear, buffet, and spit upon his Face, *Isai. 50. 6.* I gave my Back to the Smiters, and my Cheeks to them that pluck'd off the Hair: I hid not my Face from shame and spitting. That they should whip and wound his Body before they put him to death, *Isa. 53.* He was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities; by his Stripes we were healed. That they should put him to death among Thieves and Malefactors, *v. 12.* He was numbred with Transgressors, and he bear the Sin of many. That they should give him Vinegar to drink, divide his Apparel, and cast Lots for his upper Garments, *Psal. 69. 22.* and *22. 18.* In my Thirst they gave me Vinegar to drink. They part my Garments among them, and cast Lots upon my Vesture. That he should rise again the third Day, *Hosea 6. 2.* After two Days he will revive us, the Third Day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his Sight. That he should sit at the Right-hand of God his Father for Ever, *Psal. 110. 1.* The Lord hath said unto my Lord sit thou at my Right-hand, thou art a Priest for Ever, &c.

These, and a great Number more of other particular Circumstances, were revealed in the Old Testament, concerning the *Messias*, some four, some two, some one Thousand, and others eight Hundred Years before *Christ* was Born, and were afterward exactly fulfill'd

fulfill'd in his Person. And these Prophecies having been handed down to us by a People who have the greatest hatred towards Christians, and the same being found in their Bibles, Word for Word as in ours, of the Infallibility and Certainty of which *Hebrew Scriptures* there is abundant Evidence, it can hardly be imagin'd, that there can be a more clear Manifestation of any Truth before it come to pass, than there is that *Jesus Christ* is the true *Messiah*, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the World.

All these Considerations might convince the *Jews*, if they were not under a Judicial Obduration and Hardness of Heart, for their wilful Obstinacy, in not believing in *Jesus*: However, the *Gentiles* were not without some Insight into the Mysteries of *Christ Jesus* coming in the Flesh, tho' they were to receive their principal Knowledge in this Affair from the *Jews*, to whom the *Messiah* was first promised, and from whom the *Gentiles* had the Holy Scriptures, which Prophecied both of *Christ* and his Apostles. For besides that notice which divers *Gentiles* might have from the *Hebrew Bible*, which was in the *Greek Tongue* some Ages before *Christ* was born, or by Conversation with the *Jews*, with whom many of the *Pagans* lived familiarly, there were three Ways whereby they might have some Understanding of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

1. By Tradition. For it is evident, that as the *Jews* received divers matters by succession from their Forefathers, and they again from *Moses*, and *Moses* from the Patriarchs, *Jacob*, *Isaac*; and *Abraham*, who was the first Man from whom the whole Nation of *Israel* proceeded, and in whom they were distinguish'd from all other People in the World; so the *Gentiles* also had their Traditions and Monuments of Antiquity, tho' the lower they came, were still more Corrupt, their divine Knowledge being clouded with Idolatry: So the *Romans* had their Learning from the
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Egyptians, and the *Egyptians* from the *Chaldeans*, who were the first People in the World that were Instructed in Divine Matters; by *Adam*, *Methusalem*, *Noah*, and others of the most Ancient Fathers.

After the Flood (saith *Eusebius*) there were three Famous Men Contemporaries, *Abraham*, whose Progenitor was *Haber*, from whom the *Jews* were called *Hebrews*, and *Job*, a famous Instance of Patience, Holiness and Vertue; and also *Zoroaster*, who tho' not of their Lineage, but a Heathen or *Gentile*, as they now are called, but not formerly, yet was a very Learned Man, of which he left Testimonies to Posterity; and living in *Abraham's* time, might Converse with *Noah*, for *Abraham* was Born 60 Years before *Noah's* Decease, and *Noah* was Born above five Hundred Years before *Methusalem* dy'd, and *Methusalem* liv'd Two Hundred and Forty Years with our first Parent *Adam*, who had enjoy'd Conversation both with God and Angels, whereby, no doubt, he could discover many secret Misteries, especially concerning *Christ*, in whom consisted all his Hope of the Redemption of his Posterity; which secret Knowledge, it is probable, *Abraham*, *Job*, *Zoroaster*, and others, who liv'd at that time with them, might receive at the third hand from *Noah*, and his three Sons *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*, who was so long Conversant with *Adam*.

From whence it comes to pass, that there are so many evident Intimations in the Writings of *Zoroaster*, tho' a *Gentile*, concerning the Son of God; and others yet more plain, in those of *Hermes Trismegistus*, who was his Schollar, and afterwards dwelt in *Egypt*. These first *Pagan* Philosophers, having manifest understanding of the Second Person in the Trinity, whom *Trismegistus* calls, *The first begotten Son of God*, *his only Son*, *his Eternal*, *Immutable* and *Incorruptible Son*, whose Sacred Name is Ineffable, or not to be express'd. After him, *Orpheus*, *Hesiod*, and the *Platonists*, who were *Grecians*,

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ans write to the same Purpose concerning the Son of God.

2. The *Gentiles* might have some glimmering Knowledge of Christ from certain Prophetesses called *Sibils*, or *Revealers of God's Councils*, as their Name signifies in *Greek*, according to *Lactantius*. These Women, who were reckoned to be Ten in Number, and to have the Spirit of Prophecy, uttered many Speeches concerning Christ, very agreeable to those of the *Jewish* Prophets, or rather in more plain Terms than they, tho' the Heathens, to whom they were spoken, understood them not. Of which I shall insert some few of the most pertinent.

Sibilla Persica, born in *Persia*, is said to be the most Ancient, who Prophecy'd thus of Christ:

*From Adam unto Noah, it appears,
Were Fifteen Hundred, Six and Fifty Years;
To make up the First Age. And from the Flood,
Two Hundred Ninety Two are understood,
To Abraham: From him Israel to Free,
From Egypt, makes Five Hundred adding Three.
Till of King Solomon's Temple the first Stone
Be laid Four Hundred Years and Eighty One:
Four Hundred Fourteen Years there then will be
To Babylon's distress'd Captivity.
The Sixth Age from Bondage will be seen,
To make up just Six Hundred and Fourteen:
In which Year, of a Virgin shall be Born
The Prince of Peace, crown'd with a Wreath of Thorn:
Him the seventh Age shall follow and extend,
Till the World's Frame dissolve, and Time shall end.*

Sibilla Lybica, is said to be a Native of *Libia*, and to speak thus:

A King, a Priest, a Prophet all these Three,
Shall meet in one; sacred Divinity
Shall be to Flesh espoused: Oh who can scan
This Mystery, uniting God and Man?

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When this rare Birth into the World shall come,
He, the Great God of Oracles strikes dumb.

Sibilla Delphica was born near the Temple of *Apollo*,
at *Delphos*, and is said to have prophecy'd thus:

An Angel shall descend and say,
Bless'd *Mary*, Hail to thee;
Thou shalt Conceive, bring forth a Son,
Yet a pure Virgin be.
Three Gifts the *Chaldees* to thy Son,
Shall offer up much Piety,
Myrrh to a Man, Gold to a King,
And Incense to a Deity.

Sibilla Cuma was one of the Priestesses of *Apollo*,
born at *Cuma* in *Æolia*, and is said to predict what
follows:

The Antient of Days shall yield to Time,
And the Creator to new Creation:
The Deity of the God-head most sublime,
Shall Man become, to Ransome every Nation.
Dye to make others Live, and every Crime
Committed by them, since the World's Foundation,
Take on himself; and then to Hell descending,
Shall bring to Heaven all on his Grace depending.

Sibilla Samia, so named from the Isle of *Samon*, where
she was born; some think she had sight of the Pro-
phesies of *Elias*, from whence she thus Predicted.

The World shall in six Thousand Years expire,
By Water once, and then destroy'd by Fire.
The first Two Thousand void; the next the Law;
The last Two under the *Messias's* Awe.
And as Repose by Sabbath is express;
Sun, Moon, and Stars, all things shall then have Rest.

Sibilla Cumana, having declared, in her Oracles, the
Succession

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Succession of the *Assyrian, Median, Persian, and Grecian Monarchies*, speaks thus of the *Roman*:

*When Rome shall in Dominion grow high,
Her proud Towers from seven Hills braving the Sk
And shall subdue the World; in those bless'd Days
Shall come a King of Kings, and he shall raise
Another Generation, greater far
Than all Monarchs before him are
In Majesty and Power; but in that Day
So humble, he shall not refuse to pay
Tribute to Cæsar; Ah! Thrice happy he
Who shall his Subject and his Servant be.*

Sibilla Europea, of an uncertain Pedigree Country, is recorded to have Prophesied thus:

*When the Great King of all the World shall ha
No Place on Earth, by which he can be known,
When he that comes all Mortal Men to save,
Shall find his own Life by the World o'erthrown:
When the Just One shall much Injustice have,
And the Great Judge be Judged by his Own;
When by his Death, he Death to Death has giv
Then shall be open wide the Gates of Heaven.*

Sibilla Tiburtina, who derives her Name from River *Tiber* in *Rome*, having disanted upon the ven Wonders of the World, as they were account in that Age, concludes thus:

*What at these Trifles stands the World amaz'd,
And hath on them with Admiration gaz'd,
Then wonder, when the troubled World t'appease
He shall descend who made them that made these.*

Sibilla Erithrea, was born in *Babylon*, an *Assyrian* by Nation, Daughter to *Berosus*, a famous *Astrologer* she speaks of *Christ* after this manner:

*By the Great Oracles the Time's assign'd,
When God himself, in Pity to Mankind,
Shall come from Heaven, and be on Earth Incarnat
Innocent, a Lawd Immaculate.
And tho' a mighty King, yet Fishermen
Shall be his Followers, and Subjects then.*

*With whom against the World, the Flesh and Devil,
He War shall make. And Pride with all that's Evil,
Humility shall quell: And the sharp Sword,
With which they Fight, shall be the Sacred Word;
Establish'd on a Rock; from which Foundation
It shall be then divulg'd to every Nation.*

Sibilla Ægyptia Prophesied of the Number Three,
which having discanted upon at large, she adds,
*But which of us observes the Sacred Three,
Three Persons, but One God in Unity?
That Individual Essence, who dares scan,
Which is, shall, and e'er the World began,
Was in Eternity? When of these Three,
That do compose the Holy Trinity?
The second Person, Wisdom shall intomb
His Majesty within a Virgin's Womb.
True Man, True God, still to that blest Three linkt,
True Light shall shine, and false Stars be exting.*

These, and other Prophecies of the *Sibils*, were thought of such great Importance for confirming the Truth of the Christian Religion, that they are often alledged by *Justin Martyr*, *Origen*, *Lactantius*, *St. Cyril*, *St. Augustine*, *Eusebius*, and other Learned Fathers of the Primitive Church against the Enemies of the Faith of *Jesus*; and the first Christian Emperor *Constantine the Great*, sent a Learned Discourse to a Council of Bishops in his Days, to Vindicate the undoubted Authority of them, after he had examin'd the matter with the greatest Nicety and Diligence, and this may seem to be one chief Cause of his constant Zeal and Favour towards Christianity.

This excellent Prince makes it therein evident, that these Predictions could not be invented by Christians after our Saviour's Nativity. 1. Because *Marcus Varro*, a Learned Roman, who lived One Hundred Years before *Christ* was born, gives an Account at large of the Number, Writing, Country and Ages of the Ten *Sibils*, and of the Au-

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thors that mention'd them before his Time. That their Prophecies were collected from all parts of the World by the *Romans*, and carefully preserved by the High-Priest, and to be Read by none but certain Magistrates called *Fistine*, much less falsified. That *Sibilla Erithrea* lived about Six Hundred Years after Noah's Flood, and before the Wars of *Troy*, as *Apolodorus*, *Varro*, &c. her Country-men testifie, That she Prophecied, that *Troy* should be destroy'd by the *Grecians*, which was above one Thousand Years before *Christ's* Incarnation, and that *Marcus Tullius Cicero* who was Slain Forty Years before his Nativity, translated her Verses into *Latin*. And in several of his Orations intimates, that one of the *Sibils* Prophecy'd That a Great King should arise and Govern all the World, at which both he and the Senate of *Rome* seem'd much concern'd, apprehending it was meant of *Julius Caesar*, and therefore this Famous Orator declaiming against him, says, Let not our Priests by any means declare, that the *Sibils* have Predicted That a King should Rule in *Rome*, since neither the Gods nor Men will suffer any King to Reign over this City.

Constantine likewise alledged, That before *Christ* was born, *Augustus Caesar* had such Value for the *Sibils* Prophecies, that *Suetonius* says, he deposited them under the Altar of *Apollo* in the *Palatine Hill* of which none but his particular Favourites was to have a Sight, and the Poet *Virgil* being one of those that had seen some of them, wherein it was Prophecied That the great Ordinance of God, from the beginning of the World should be now fulfilled, that the Virgin should come, and the Golden Age return. And again, A New Progeny or Off-spring is sent down from Heaven, the dearly beloved Son of God; who being our Leader and Captain, the Sins of the World shall be taken away. These and many other Expressions of this kind (saith this renowned Emperor) has induc'd

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me to count these *Sibils* Blessed whom our Saviour vouchsafed to chuse for Prophets, to foretell to the World what Divine Providence had design'd for the Good of Mankind.

And there may this be added also for the Reputation of these Prophecies. 1. That *Constantine* insists only on the Testimony of such Writers as lived before *Christ* was born, or the Name of Christians thought of. 2. That he offered these Proofs to the Consideration of a great Council of Learned Men. 3. That he had Power and Opportunity to see and examine the Original in the *Roman Treasury*. 4. That he had several Learned Men about him, particularly *Lactantius*, who made an exact Scrutiny into the Authority of these Predictions, and confirmed the Truth of them; as doth *Eusebius* also that Famous Ecclesiastical Historian. Lastly, *Constantine* was the first Christian Emperor in the World, and lived Three Hundred Years after *Christ*, when the *Roman Records* were entire, and would never have taken so much Pains about this matter, had not he thought it a thing of great Importance for the Confirmation of the Christian Religion.

3. And let us briefly consider the Confession of Oracles, concerning the Coming of *Christ*, especially towards the Approach thereof. Among others, a Priest of *Apollo*, enquiring of his Oracle concerning God and the True Religion, had that Answer in Greek: *O thou unhappy Priest, why dost thou ask me of God, who is the Father of all things? That most renowned King, and his Dear and Only Son, and the Spirit which containeth All, will shortly compel me to forsake this Habitation, and utter no more Oracles.* After this, *Augustus Caesar* growing Aged, would needs go to enquire of the Oracles of *Apollo* at *Delphos*, who should be his Successor; and what should happen after his Death? The Oracles was long silent, and the Emperor continued to offer mighty Sacr-

fices and at length *Apollo*, as if enforced, said, *An Hebrew Child, which Ruleth over all Gods, Commands me to leave this Habitation, and to return forthwith to Hell.* *Augustus* being much surpriz'd at this strange Answer, returned to *Rome*, and soon after erected an Altar with this Inscription, *To the first Begotten Son of God.*

Josephus, in his Antiquities, testifies, That about the Time of our Saviour's Birth, many remakable Prodigies happened, which occasion the Magicians, or Wise-Men, in their Predictions, to conclude that some extraordinary Person would shortly appear in the World. Which Presages some learned Persons apply'd to *Augustus Caesar*, who then Reigned Prosperously, but the more divinely inspired, interpreted it to signifie him, who, as *Isaiah* Prophefied, should have the Government upon his Shoulders, even the Saviour of the World: For besides what the Evangelists mention of the Angels appearing to the Shepherds, and the Star which directed the Wise-Men to our Saviour, it is recorded by *Paul Horatius* and *Eutropius*, Secretaries to *Augustus*, and likewise by *Eusebius*, that, at the Time of his Birth, a Fountain of pure Oyl broke forth in a Publick Inn at *Rome*, Running very freely a whole Day; and that at Noon, in a fair Day, a Circle was seen about the Sun, as Resplendent as the Sun it self. *Comestor*, in his Scholastick History, affirms, that on the Day of the Birth of *Christ*, a Temple at *Rome*, Dedicated to the Goddess *Pax*, fell to the Ground; adding, that when it was first built by the *Romans*, they enquired of the Oracle of *Apollo*, how long it should continue? who answered, Even till a Virgin shall bring forth a Child, which they judged impossible, and that therefore their Temple should endure to Eternity; yet at the Virgin's bearing a Child, even the King of Heaven, it fell to the Earth. Lastly, *Lucas de Tuy*, in his History of *Spain*, writes, he found

in antient Chronicles that, by Computation, the same Night wherein our Saviour was born, there appeared in Spain, at Mid-night, a Cloud with so great a Light, that it seemed like Mid-day.

Let not the Reader think this Introduction to our Blessed Lord's Life tedious or impertinent, since by what has been mention'd, it is manifest that his Coming into the World was foretold, both to *Jew* and *Gentile*, by all the Ways that can possibly be imagin'd, that is, by Prophecies, Signs, Prodigies, Figures, Ceremonies, Traditions, and by the Confession of the Devils themselves in their Oracles. Neither was his Appearance only predicted, but likewise the Design thereof, namely, to be the Saviour of the World, to Dye for the Sins of Mankind, and to establish a new Law and a better Covenant, and that he should appear in the Likeness of a Man in Poverty, Humility, &c. The Time also of his Appearance was declared, with the manner of his Birth, Life, Actions, Death, Resurrection and Ascension. And finally, there can be nothing more required to the Fore-knowledge of any one thing to come, than was delivered concerning the *Messias*, before *Christ* or Christians were heard of in the World.

I shall now proceed to give an Account of the former Particulars in order, and first of the Birth of our Saviour. It is generally agreed by all Writers, *Pagan*, *Jewish*, and *Christian*, That *Jesus*, whom we believe to be the true *Christ*, was born in *Decem. 25.* in the Forty first Year of the Reign of the Emperor *Augustus*, which was Fifteen Years before his Reign ended; and in the Thirty Third Year of the Reign of *Herod* in *Judea* about Forty Years before his Death; and, according to common Account, Four Thousand Years after the Creation; at which Time the State of the World stood thus: The three Monarchies of *Assyria*, *Persia*, and *Greece*, were extinguished and gone, and the Fourth, which was the

Roman and greater than all the rest succeeded, according to the Prophecy of *Daniel*, Five Hundred Years before, Chap. 2. at which Time he says, *The God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom, which shall break in Pieces and consume all these Kingdoms, and shall stand for ever.*

Octavius Cæsar, Sir-nam'd *Augustus*, after Five Civil-Wars, wherein he was engaged, with many other Troubles, and much Bloodshed, was now advanced to the Imperial Throne, and Reigned peaceably many Years, and in Token of Universal Tranquillity, the Temple of *Janus*, always open in the time of War was now shut, which had happen'd but twice before from the Building of *Rome* till that Time; and the very same Day that *Christ* was Born, as was after observed, the Senate of *Rome* offering to bestow the Title of our Lord upon *Augustus Cæsar*, he refused it, signifying thereby, that after the Miseries and Desolations which the World had sustained for many Years, Liberty, Peace, and Security, were now established. Some write, That he deny'd himself this Honour, saying unknowingly, That a Greater Lord than he was now come into the World, to whom that Title more justly belong'd. And hereby the Prophecy of *Isaiah* (who Liv'd above Five Hundred Years before *Daniel*) was fulfilled, who calls *Christ Jesus* the Prince of Peace, and says, *The People shall sit in Peace, and there shall be no End of Peace.* And in *Psalms* 71. it is said, *In his Days shall be abundance of Peace.* Which tho' it may be understood of Eternal Peace and Tranquillity of Soul, yet considering that External Peace was necessary at that time for publishing the Gospel, and since this Universal Peace was sudden and unexpected, the *Roman* Monarchy being but newly established, it is a strong Argument that this was the time fore-ordain'd for the Coming of the *Messias*.

As to the particular State of *Judea* at *Jesus's* Nativity, *Josephus* the Jew, who was Born within Five
Years

Years after *Christ's* Passion, gives this Account thereof. *Herod*, a Stranger, whose Father is call'd *Antipater*, came out of *Idumea*, had obtain'd such Favour with the *Romans*, by means of his Father, who was Rich, Politick, and Ambitious, and by his own Industry, he being likewise Comely, and every way qualify'd for a Courtier, that at length *Hyrchanus*, King of *Judea*, of the House of *David*, and Tribe of *Judah*, marry'd his Daughter to him, and made him Governor of *Galilee*. *Hyrchanus*, after this, being taken Prisoner by the *Parthians*, and carry'd to that Country, *Herod* fled to *Rome*, and there, by the Favour of *Mark Anthony*, who Rul'd jointly with *Octavius Augustus Caesar*, he obtained the Kingdom of *Judea*; though *Hyrchanus*, his Father-in-law, was yet alive in *Parthia*; and likewise *Aristobulus*, his younger Brother, with his three Sons *Antigonus*, *Alexander*, and *Aristobulus*, and divers others of the Blood Royal of *Judea*. But *Herod* having taken Possession of the Kingdom by his Subtilty, got them all into his Hands, and Murdered them; and likewise his Wife *Mariamne*, the Daughter of *Hyrchanus*. He also put to Death Forty of the Principal Noble-men of *Judea*, and all the *Sanhedrim* of Seventy two Senators of the Tribe of *Judea*, that Ruled the People, as *Philo the Jew*, who Lived at that time, testifies; he Killed the chief of the Sect of the *Pharisees*, and Burnt all the Chronicles and Genealogies of all the Kings and Princes of *Judea*, causing *Nicholus Damascenus*, his Historagographer, to draw out his Pedigree, and to affirm that he descended from the Ancient Kings of that Country. He sold the Office of the High-Priesthood to Strangers; and finally, he made such Havock of the Family of *Judah*, that no part of any Government, Dignity, or Principallity remained in their Hands. And when all this was done, *Jesus* of the same House and Line was Born in *Bethlehem*, the City of *David*, who was the first King of the House of

Judah. And then was exactly fulfill'd the Prophecy of Old *Jacob*; That the Scepter should not depart from *Judah*, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet, untill *Shiloh* come, and to him shall the gathering of the People be; Exodus 40. 10.

And furthermore, all the Traditions and Observations of the Ancient *Jews*, pointed at the Coming of the *Messias* in the Reign of *Augustus*, and they had such great Expectations of him, that several Impostors took the Advantage thereof, and declared, that they were the true *Christs*, who instantly drew a great Number after them. Among others, *Judas Galileus* (as *St. Luke* calls him) and another *Judas*, both lewd Fellows. Also *Antoages*, a Shepherd, and two others called *Thoudas* and *Egyptus*, were notorious Deceivers; but above all these was *Borcozbama*, who (as the *Jewish* Talmud, or Book of Precepts affirm) was, for Thirty Years together, received by the Rabbies themselves for the *Messias*, till at last they killed him, because they saw he was not able to deliver them from their Subjection to the *Romans*. And from hence proceeded the Diligence of the *Magi*, or Wise-Men of the *East*, in observing the Star, which they expected pursuant to the ancient Prophecy of *Balaam*, Num. 24. 17. *There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, &c.* And therefore, as soon as the People had heard of *John* the *Baptist* in the Wilderness, they ran to him, asking him if he were *Christ*; and afterwards earnestly urged the same Question to our Saviour himself; so that, as to the Time of the Birth of *Jesus*, there concurred a great number of Signs and Circumstances, as the General Peace of the World, the Extinction of the Regal Line of *Judah*, the Attestation of Oracles, the Observation of the Rabbies, the extraordinary Expectation of all the *Jews*: The Experience of Seventeen Hundred and Twelve Years since *Jesus* appeared, wherein we see they, in vain, expected another

Messias

Messias; their being dispers'd all over the World without Temple, Law, Sacrifice, Prophet, or Promise of their Redemption, whereas in all other their Captivities, and Afflictions, they had some comfortable Prophecy or Promise of Deliverance; from all which Considerations put together, we may assuredly conclude, That *Christ* was born exactly at the Time predicted by the Spirit of God, and consequently that he only is the true *Messias* and Saviour of the World.

Now, tho' the Holy Scripture does not Record the exact Time of the coming of *Jesus Christ* into the World, yet it furnishes us with several Indications that in the Fifteenth Year of the Reign of *Tiberius Caesar* he was about Thirty Years of Age, and consequently that he was born about Fifteen Years before the Death of *Augustus*, as we have already intimated, which Prince, according to *Suetonius*, lived about Seventy Six Years, and at the Age of Twenty received the Succession of *Julius Caesar*, his Uncle, killed in the Senate-House by *Brutus Cassius* and others, to revenge whose Death, he associates with *Mark Anthony* and *Lepidus*, and these three jointly govern'd the Roman Monarchy for twelve Years; and after the Death of the two latter, *Augustus* Reigned singly Forty Four Years; in the Forty First of whose Reign, the Oracles of the Holy Prophets being accomplished, and the Time which God had appointed to declare his Mercy, and a Saviour to the World being come, *Jesus* was born about Four Thousand Years after the Creation of the World.

Hereupon the Angel *Gabriel* was sent from God first to *Zacharias*, when he offered Incense in the Temple, to tell him that he should have a Son who should be called *John*, whose Birth was to be the Joy and Glory of *Israel*. Six Months after, God sent the same Angel to the Virgin *Mary* at *Nazareth*, where she usually lived: She was espoused to *Joseph*,
who

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who was of the House of *David*, as she also was, whom God gave her for a Guardian, or Protector of her Innocence; being both Marry'd, saith *St. Austin*, but used no Conjugal Embraces, at least, until God had honoured their Marriage with the most Angelical Fruit that ever appeared upon Earth; and to this end he sent the Angel *Gabriel* to the Holy Virgin. He found her alone, (as *St. Ambrose* observes) and the Praises which he gave her in his Salutation at first troubled her, she being apprehensive of the Spirits of Darkness who transform themselves into Angels of Light. She mused within herself at what she saw and heard; and by her Example, taught Holy Souls not to be rash and hasty, but to take some time to Judge all Things.

The Angel knew her Trouble, and to avert it, said, *Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found Favour with God: And behold thou shalt Conceive in thy Womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his Name Jesus, He shall be Great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of his Father David, and he shall Reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no End.* *St. Luke 1.* This Discourse somewhat removed her Surprise at his first Salutation, when he said, *Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou among Women.* She heard, without Discomposure, this Message of the Angel, and only asked him, how, what he had told her could come to pass, seeing she knew not a Man? She asked this Question without Wavering in the Faith, and without Curiosity, that she might submit herself to the Will of God, and follow punctually what he had Ordained. The Angel assured her, that Man should have no part in this Work; but that the Holy-Ghost should come upon her, and over-shadow her, and would himself form in her the Child of which she was to be Mother; He at the same time shew'd her what

what had happen'd to her Cousin *Elizabeth*, assuring her, that that holy Woman who pass'd for Barren in the World, was already pregnant six Months, by an effect of the powerful Operation of the Holy Spirit, to whom nothing was impossible.

When the Blessed Virgin had received this Answer from the Angel, she apply'd her self wholly to testify to God her perfect Resignation to his Will, which she did in these humble Words, which admirably discover the pious Disposition of her Soul. *Behold the Hand-maid of the Lord, let it be to me according to thy Word.* And she said, *My Soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,* &c. The Angel immediately left her with the same Humility, she being not at all puff'd up with these happy Tydings. And at this Moment the Son of God grew Incarnate in her holy Womb. She knew that those whom God most Favours, are most oblig'd to be humble, and that every new Grace from God bring along with it a new Temptation to Pride, if we do not immediately resist it by a perfect Humiliation of Mind. For without staying to consider the high Condition whereunto she was now rais'd, she undertook a painful Journey to visit her Cousin *Elizabeth*, who dwelt in the Hill-Country, in a City of *Judah*, and entering into the House of *Zacharias*, saluted *Elizabeth*; and it came to pass, that when *Elizabeth* heard the Salutation of Mary, the Babe leap'd in her Womb. And *Elizabeth* was fill'd with the Holy-Ghost, and spoke with a loud Voice, and said, *Blessed art thou among Women, and Blessed is the Fruit of thy Womb,* &c. The Holy Virgin who was not at all lifted up at what the Angel had told her, was no more elevated with the great Praises her Cousin had given her. She consider'd God as the Free disposer of his Gifts, and her Humility as the Channel by which they were convey'd to her, and she utter'd that excellent Canticle afore-mention'd, which may be called the Glory of the Meek, and the Confusion of the Proud.

The

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The Virgin being returned Home, soon learn'd that the greatest Favours which God bestows upon his Saints on Earth are oft attended with great Afflictions. For the signs of her being with Child appearing, *Joseph* was in a manner forced, notwithstanding the many Proofs he had of the Virgin's Purity, to attribute to the Work of Sin, that which was only the Work of the Holy-Ghost; but being a Just Man, would not make publick the Fault of which he found her guilty, and thereby gave a great Example to Men; that we should keep secret the Failings of those to whom we owe Love and Respect: He resolved only to leave her, or put her away privately, and not to make her a publick Example; to shew by this means at least his dislike of the Evil which a Person so dear to him had committed. But when he was ready to do this God hindr'd him, advertising him in the Night, by an Angel, in a Dream, not to fear to take unto him *Mary* his Wife, and Discovered the Secret of this Divine Child. *For that which was conceived in her was of the Holy-Ghost; and that she should bring forth a Son, enjoining him to call his Name Jesus, for he should save his People from their Sins.*

Joseph being comforted by the Words of the Angel, learn'd how reserved a Man ought to be in the Censure of others, and how much we are obliged to judge always favourably of pious Persons, notwithstanding all seeming Appearances of their Guilt. He believed what the Angel had told him; and he deserved to be called the Father of *Jesus Christ*, for having imitated that great Faith by which the Virgin *Mary* became his Mother.

Now tho' the manner of the Conception of *Jesus*, and the Angel's Message to his Mother, depend principally upon the Credit of the Virgin herself, who only was privy thereto, and upon the Testimony of *Joseph*, to whom it was revealed by the Angel afterwards; yet, if we consider the Circumstances

stances thereof, and the Honesty and Simplicity of both the Relators, it is very improbable that good *Joseph* would have concealed a matter so much against himself and against the Law, if he had not been fully assured of the Truth of it. And again, considering the Innocency of the Blessed Virgin, who, as *St. Austin* and many Ancient Fathers advance several manifest Arguments to prove, was not then above Fourteen Years Old, it cannot be imagined that she should invent such a thing against herself; especially since the Prophecy which she uttered in her Cantic of Praise, that *All Generations shall call her Blessed*, is now fulfil'd in the Sight of all Men. And we have already proved that the Holy Prophets, as well as the Ancient Jewish Rabbies, have declared, That the *Messiah* should not be begotten in the Ordinary way of Generation, but be born of a pure and undefiled Virgin: And *Clemens Alexandrinus* writes, that *Simon Magus*, that he might not seem inferior to Jesus in that Point, pretended that he was born of a Virgin as *Christ* was.

When the time of the Delivery of our Blessed Virgin drew nigh, the Divine Providence, to bring her out of *Nazareth* to *Bethlehem*, (where the Prophets had foretold the *Messias* should be born) permitted that the Edict of the Emperor *Augustus Caesar* (who desiring to satisfy either his Pride or Covetousness, in numbering all the Families that were in his Dominions) should in a manner disturb the whole World to make the Holy Virgin come to *Bethlehem*, with *Joseph* her espoused Husband, (who was of that Town, and of the Lineage of *David*) to be Taxed. And therefore she considered not the Troublesomeness of a long Journey, and the Inconvenienceness of the Time, and her own Condition; but obeyed this Order of the Emperor's with the same respect as if an Angel, or even the Almighty himself had required her to go thither. By which we are taught

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to have an Eye to God in Men, who are only his Instruments, and who subvert all his secret Purposes. When they were arrived at *Bethlehem*, every one refused to Lodge them, because their Houses were all full. One of the Antient Fathers Discants thus upon this Transaction.

And thus did our Saviour hasten, as it were, to shew us, at his very Birth, an Example of Humility, his suffering with Patience the Repulses of Men; not disdain- ing to be Born in a Stable, to teach us to despise the Glory of the World, by his Aversion to it in his own Person. This Temper of Mind did he infuse into the Blessed Virgin, who was well contented to bring forth Jesus Christ in a Stable, understanding that this Poverty would conceal her from Men and Devils, and that the Unkindness of the People at Bethlehem was necessary to the Designs of God. There is nothing more Instructive than this Abasement of the Son of God; and all the Beauty of the Creatures do not so much oblige us to adore him, as this Divine Humilia- tion of himself. We ought likewise to Learn this from the Infancy of Jesus Christ, that we have no less need of the Assistance of God at all times, than a Child newly born has of the Succours of Man.

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The Birth of our Blessed Lord and Saviour
J E S U S C H R I S T.



THE Blessed Virgin having brought forth her First-born Son, and blessed the World by his Birth, *she wrap'd him in Swadling-Cloaths, and laid him in a Manger, because there was no room in the Inn;* and he no sooner came into the World, but that he shew'd by the Choice of the first Persons to whom he would have it known, that he would hide the Mysteries of his Holy Gospel from the Rich, Mighty, and Wife, and Reveal them to the Simple and Innocent People of the World; for the same Night that the Virgin was deliver'd of him, ' There where Shepherds ' in the Fields watching their Flocks, and the Angel ' of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the ' Lord Shone round about them, so that they were ' fore afraid. And the Angel said, Fear not, I am ' come to bring you good Tydings of great Joy, for ' unto you is born this Day, in the City of David, a ' Saviour which is *Christ* the Lord: And this shall be ' a Sign unto you; ye shall find the Babe wrap'd in ' Swadling-

Swadling-Cloaths, and lying in a Manger. And suddenly there was with the Angel a Multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising God, and saying Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-Will towards Men. It was to these Persons that the Angel appeared on a sudden, surrounded with a great Brightness, which denoted this great Divine Light, which now began to appear in the World, and told them, he brought such good Tidings, or good News, as would fill all People with Joy; and at the same time declared to them, that the *Messias* who had been so long expected, was now born; and to confirm their Belief of it, sent them to *Bethlehem*, where it was foretold it should be born; and this humble Angel being not at all ashamed of the Humility of his Master, plainly told those Rustick People, that they should find in a Manger, a Child wrap'd up in Swadling Cloaths, and that this was He whom he meant, and who was the *Expectation of all Israel*.

The Shepherds, at length recovering themselves from the Astonishment wherein they lay, at the Words of the Angel, and the Sight of the Heavenly Host, determined to pass over to *Bethlehem* to see there the Wonder that God had wrought, making great haste in their Journey, to shew by their readiness that our Saviour must not be sought with Coldness and Indifference; and being come to the Place, they found the Blessed Virgin with *Joseph* and the Child lying in a Manger, as the Angel had related. This Outward Meanness did not surprize them; for it is observed on the contrary, that they were filled with Admiration, Glorifying and Praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, and surprized all they met with by relating thereof. And nothing can be offered which may more confirm the Truth of this Affair, than the Credit, Honesty, and Simplicity of those that Reported

ported it, who could never agree together to feign or invent a thing, that one or other of them should not happen to discover the falshood of it.

Eight Days after, our Saviour's Birth being Accomplished, *Josepb* and *Mary* thought of Circumcising of him, which was necessary to be done, both to demonstrate the Verity of his Humane Nature; and likewise to take him from the Scandal of Uncircumcision, which would effectually have prejudiced the *Jews* against his Doctrine, or having Communication with him, if he had not submitted to this Ordinance which God had so positively Instituted. He then had that Name given him which declared him to be the Saviour of the World, that is, JESUS, a Name that an Angel from Heaven appointed his Mother to give. And tho' it be not set down in the Old Testament, yet is found in a Book extant before Christ was born, Namely *Esdra* 2. 7. where these Words are recorded in the Person of God the Father. 'Behold the time shall come, when the Signs shall appear that I have told, &c: and my Son *Jesus* shall be revealed with those who are with him. And after those Years my Son *Christ* shall die, and the Earth shall give up those that Sleep therein.

Rabbi Hackdash, a *Jew*, proveth also by the Cabbi-list out of many Scriptures, that the *Messias*, at his coming should be *Jesus*; for, saith he, as the Name of him who brought the *Israelites* out of Bondage, in the Land of Promise, was *Jesus*, or *Joshua*, so must his Name be *Jesus*, who shall the second time deliver them from their present Subjection, and restore them to their Ancient Possessions in *Judea*, which is the Principal Benefit they expect from their *Messias*.

Neither is it to be imagin'd, that the Virgin *Mary* should resolve upon this Name of her self, since there were several other Names of more Honour

nour and Esteem among the *Jews* at that time, as *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, &c.* so that if she had been left to her own Choice, she would probably have taken one of their Name.

Jesus Christ being born in *Judea*, where the True God was only worshipped; God caused a Star to shine at his Birth, thereby to shew that he did not come into the World for the People of the *Jews* only; but that his Grace was to be bestow'd also on the *Gentiles*, as had been declared by the Prophets, to draw them from Idolatry and the worship of Devils, to the God and Saviour of the World, whose Light should shine, like the Star, into their Hearts.

The *Magi* or Wise-Men having perceived this Star in the *East*, and knowing it to denote the Birth of the Sovereign of the *Jews*, they came to *Jerusalem* and enquir'd where he was that was born King of the *Jews*, for they had seen his Star, and were come to worship him.

King *Herod*, who had usurp'd the Kingdom of *Judea*, when he heard of a New King of the *Jews*, was much troubled, as well as all the People of *Jerusalem*; whereupon he assembled the Chief Priests and Scribes, and demanded of them, in what Place *Christ* should be Born? who told him, at *Bethlehem* in *Judea*, as the Prophet *Micah* had written: *And thou, Bethlehem, in the Land of Judea, &c. out of thee shall come a Governor that shall Rule my People Israel.* *Herod* hereupon call'd secretly the Wise-Men, and enquired diligently what Time the Star appeared, they answer'd him fully to whatever he demanded without fear; who resolving, if possible, to murder him, he requir'd them to search diligently for the Young Child; and when they had found him, to bring him Word again, that he might come to worship him also. The Wise-Men being directed by the Star to the House, found the Young Child, and fell down and worshipped him, offering him Presents of Gold, Frankincense,

Frankincense and Mirrh; and being warn'd of God in a Dream, never return'd to *Herod*, but went home another way.

St. Cyprian writes, it was an Ancient Tradition of the Church, That the *Magies* of the *East* were little Kings, or rather petty Lords of particular Places, such as those of whom *Josbua* slew Thirty in one Battle: *Epiphanius* is of Opinion, that they came to *Jerusalem* two Years after *Christ's* Nativity, because *Herod* slew all the Infants of that Age; but others hold more probably, that the Star appear'd to them two Years before *Christ's* Nativity, so that they came to *Bethlehem* Thirteen Days after his Birth, which the Church calls *Epiphany*, Twelfth-Day, or the Day of the Three Kings. *St. Basil* supposeth they were great Astrologers and Learned Men, who by Art Magick, which was much practis'd in those Countreies, perceived that the Power of their Gods and Oracles daily decay'd. They might likewise hear of the Prophecy, commonly spoken of in the *East* in those Days (as *Suetonius* and *Josephus* testifie) That out of *Judea* should come the Ruler of all the World; and might also have the Prophecy of *Balaam* amongst them from *Moses's* time, being about Fifteen Hundred Years before; and after that again, it is Prophesied of by *David*, as we have already mention'd.

Pliny, an Heathen Writer, takes notice of this Star also (which he terms a Comet, as they called all extraordinary Stars) that appeared in the latter end of *Augustus's* Reign, which was different from all others that ever appeared, and therefore judg'd, by the whole Society of Southsayers in that Age, to portend universal Good to Mankind; for which cause an Image of it was erected at *Rome*, and this Comet, saith he, is worshipp'd throughout the whole World. *St. Origen* also writes, That *Charemon*, a *Stoick*, being much affected at the Sight of it, because, after its appearance, the Power of their Oracles did

did sensibly decay, he with other Astronomers took a Journey into *Judea*, to inform himself in the matter, who all concurred in one Opinion, that some God was descended from Heaven to Earth for the Benefit of the Sons of Men. And finally, the *Sibils* speaking of the coming of *Christ*, declared plainly That a Blazing Star should proceed his Birth. And *Virgil*, who had read thereof in the *Sibils* Prophecies and saw the same soon after, apply'd, that as well as several others, in Flattery to *Augustus Caesar*, in his fourth Eclogue, *Behold the Star of Caesar, the Son of Venus hath now appeared*: Which was indeed the Star of *Christ Jesus*, *Caesar's* Lord and Master.

Forty Days after the Birth of our Lord, the Days of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin being accomplish'd, she brought him to *Jerusalem* to present him to the Lord, in Obedience to the Law whereby all the First-born were to be offered to God, and as they were to be ransomed by the Sacrifice of some Animals, a pair of Turtle-Doves or two Pidgeons, so his Mother now fulfill'd the same Precept. At which time *St. Luke* reports, two strange things happen'd namely, The two Grave and Reverend Persons *Simeon* Sire named the Just, and *Anna* the Prophetess, both Persons of extraordinary Sanctity among the *Jews*, coming into the Temple at the same time. *Simeon* being filled with the Holy Spirit, to whom the Gospel gives this Testimony, That he waited for the Consolation of *Israel*, soon discover'd by the Light of his Faith, his Blessed Saviour hid under the weakness of so small a Body, and taking him up in his Arms, being Transported with an holy Joy, he gave thanks to God by this excellent Canticle, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy Servants depart in Peace, according to thy Word, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation, which thou hast prepared before the Face of all People. A Light to lighten the *Gentiles*, and the Glory of thy People *Israel*. And then blessing them

them, said to his Mother, ' Behold, this Child is set
' for the fall and the rising again of many in *Israel*,
' and for a Sign that shall be spoken against, (yea, a
' Sword shall pass through thine own Soul also) that
' the Thoughts of many Hearts may be revealed. St.
Luke 2. At which Words *Joseph* and *Mary* much mar-
vel'd. As for *Anna* the Prophetess, she being an Ho-
ly Widow, added her publick Thanks and Praises to
those which *Simeon* had already given our Saviour;
her Exemplary Life gave Authority to her Words
for being become a Pattern, as 'twere to all Widows,
after Seven Years Marriage, she had past the rest of
her Life to her Thirty-Fourth Year in Fasting and
Prayer, without departing from the Temple, and now
declared to all that look'd for Redemption in *Jerusa-*
lem, That *Jesus* was the *Messiah*.

Now these things being publish'd at this time, and
confirm'd afterwards by the Event, there is no doubt
of the Truth of St. *Luke's* Narration, which is
strengthened by so many particular Circumstances of
Time, Places, and Persons, publicly known at *Jeru-*
salem. As for *Simeon*, he was the Scholar of a
Learned Jew called *Hillel*, and Contemporary with
Jonathan, the Author of the *Chaldaick* Paraphraise;
and the *Jewish* *Talmud* confesseth, that after the
Death of these two Men, especially of *Simeon*, the
Spirit of the great *Sanhedrim* much fail'd and decay'd;
which, from the Captivity of *Babylon*, till the time of
Herod supply'd in some Measure the Spirit of Pro-
phesy, which was among the *Israelites* before that
Captivity. And *Anna* having lived so many Years in
the Temple, must needs be known amongst most of
the People of *Judea*.

King *Herod*, having long expected in vain the re-
turn of the Wise-Men to hear what discoveries they
had made, imagined that they mocked him; at-
tributing to the Disrespect of his Person what they
had done only by the Command of God, and entering
into

into a strange Passion for fear of being dethron'd by this new King, resolv'd upon his Death, and to make sure of it, that *Christ* should by no means escape, he gave Order for killing all the Children in *Bethlehem*, and the Borders thereof, which he thought were about his Age, to the Number of Fourteen Thousand, as the *Greeks* and *Ethiopians*, in their Kalendar and Liturgy Commemorates, which bloody Project some of the Ancient Fathers relate was executed after this manner. That *Herod* ordered all the Children in that Country to be brought together, which the Credulous Mothers supposing it had been upon the Account of their Number and Age, that they might be Taxed, did not hinder, but wittingly suffered themselves and their Babes to be betrayed to an unremediable Butchery. Yet the Malice of *Herod* did not stop there; he went up into the Hill-Country, and thrice sent a Messenger of Death towards *John*, the Son of *Zachary*, who was now in the Second Year of his Age, but the Mother's Care had been early with him, who saved his Life, by sending him into Desert Places till the time came that was appointed for the Manifestation of the *Messiah* to *Israel*, which was not to be till the Thirtieth Year of his Age. But as the Babes of *Bethlehem* died in the Place of *Christ*, so did *John Baptist's* Father die for him: For *Zachary* was Slain between the Temple and the Altar, because he refused to betray his Son to the Fury of this bloody Wretch. Thus far Saint *Chrysostom*, *Peter Martyr*, and others: But St. *Origen* and St. *Cyril*, Record this Tradition, That a Place being seperated in the Temple for Virgins, *Zachary* suffered the Mother of our Lord to abide there after the Birth of her Holy Son, affirming her still to be a Virgin: And that for this reason, not *Herod*, but the Scribes and Pharisees kill'd *Zachary*. However it was, *Tertullian*, who writ an Excellent Apology for the Christian Religion against the Heathens

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Heathens, reports that the Blood of *Zachary* had so be-
 -near'd the stones of the Pavement, on which he was
 murder'd, that no Art or Industry could wash the
 Tincture out, as if God would upbraid the Irreligi-
 on, Infidelity and Cruelty of the *Jews*, with a per-
 -petual Character of their Guilt, set before their Eyes
 indelibly, in exacting of them all the Blood of Right-
 -eous Persons from *Abel* to *Zacharias*.

Notwithstanding the horrible Butchery that *Herod*
 made of the Children of *Bethlehem*, yet amongst this
 great slaughter, he, who alone was aim'd at in it,
 was the only Child that escaped: Which makes it
 evident, that the Wicked can hurt the Righteous no
 farther than God gives them Power; and though all
 the People of the World should unanimously conspire
 together, they can do nothing against what he has
 determined. And we may likewise observe, that tho'
 this bloody Tyrant was esteem'd the greatest *Politi-*
cian of his Time, yet a poor Child makes him trem-
 -ble, and he, in vain, uses all manner of Craft and Vic-
 -lence to destroy him; and in Pursuance thereof, pro-
 -ceeded in the full Course of his Fury, by a Cruelty
 which the most barbarous People would abhor, to put
 to Death those innocent Infants, thereby to draw *Je-*
sus into the common Ruin, who, tho' unknown to
 him, yet fill'd him with so much Terror: But God,
 who foresaw the Transports of this Prince, confound-
 -ed his vain Wisdom, by rendering all the Designs
 fruitless. He sent his Angel in the Night to *Josepb*,
 when he thought of returning Home from *Jerusalem*
 to *Nazareth*, to tell him, that he should immediately
 take the Young Child and his Mother, and flee into
 Egypt, because *Herod* would use all means to destroy
 him.

Josepb, without Reasoning on what the Angel
 told him, took, the same Moment, our Saviour and
 his Mother, who excus'd not her self on the Unsea-
 -sonableness of the Time, which was Midnight; nor

on the Difficulty of this troublesome journey to go into an unknown Land, and which was wholly given up to Idolatry, but both of them thought only how to save the blessed Infant from the Fury of *Herod*, and their Love made them willing to undertake whatsoever might secure him from Danger. They went into this Foreign Country, to find that Safety which was not to be had amongst a People whom God had deliver'd by so many Miracles: God then permitted this Flight to comfort those of his Children, whose Fear might oblige to fly on such Occasions. And he thus taught the Church, that when the Persecutions of the Grandees of the World are violent, we may, after the Example of *Jesus Christ*, steal from their Fury, and retire to Places of Security.

St. Jerom writes, That when the Holy Virgin and her Son were arriv'd in *Egypt*, all the Images of their Gods tumbled from their Altars to the Grounds, and that their Oracles ceas'd, from that Time ever after to give Answers to any Demands made to them. Which is Consonant to the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, Chap. 19. above Seven Hundred Years before, *Behold the Lord rideth upon a swift Cloud, which was his Flesh and Humanity, and shall come into Egypt, and the Idols of Egypt shall be removed at his Presence, and their Hearts shall melt, &c.* And *Eusebius* sheweth That this was manifestly fulfill'd in the Sight of all the World, for that no Nation embrac'd the Christian Religion with such a readiness as the *Egyptians*, demolishing their Idolatrous Images before any other Heathen Nations: And as they had been the first, who had set up Idolatry, and given Example to other Countries to do the same, so they were the first, who after the Coming of *Christ*, returned to the Worship of the True God. It follows in *Isaiah* 19. And the *Egyptians will I give over into the Hand of a cruel Lord, and a fierce King shall Rule over them, which came to pass at the very time of Christ's Appearance.*

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For after many Slaughters and Cruelties exercis'd upon *Egypt* by the *Romans* under *Pompey Caesar*, *Mark Anthony*, and others, at length *Cleopatra*, who was the last of the Line and Family of *Ptolomy*, was enforced to kill herself. After which, *Augustus Caesar* took Possession of all *Egypt*, and subje'd it into a Province under the Dominion of the *Roman Empire*. Yet the same Prophet concludes, that after all these Temporal Afflictions, God would be merciful to those that accepted of his Grace, Verse 16, &c. *In that Day there shall be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt: For they shall cry unto the Lord, because of the Oppressors, and he shall send them a Saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them: And the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that Day, and shall do Sacrifice and Oblation, and they shall return unto the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.*

After the Death of *Herod*, who intended to have destroy'd our Lord and Saviour at his Birth, God who sent *Joseph* into *Egypt*, to avoid this Persecution, sent him also an Angel to Command his return into the Land of *Israel*, so that *Jesus Christ* was not one whole Year in *Egypt*. And this the Prophet *Hoseah* plainly Predicted some hundred Years before, Chap. 11. as it is apply'd to him by *St. Matthew*, Ch. 2. *When Israel was a Child then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt. Joseph* obeyed this new Order with the same readiness he had executed the first, and came and dwelt in the Town of *Nazareth*, to avoid the Fury of *Achelaus*, the Son of *Herod*, who reigned in *Judea*, and to accomplish that which was spoken by the Prophets, *He shall be called a Nazarene.*

The Gospel does not take notice of any thing that pass'd from our Saviour's Nativity to his Baptism, but only in this one Action, which he did at the Age of Twelve Years, being now growing up, waxing strong in Spirit, filled in Wisdom; and the Grace of God

was upon him. For *Joseph* and *Mary* omitting none of the Observances which the Law requir'd, went constantly every Year up to *Jerusalem*, at the Feast of the Passover, and at this time took *Jesus* along with them; and after the Eight Days of the Feast were accomplished, they returned to *Nazareth*, and our Blessed Saviour, who they thought was in the Company, remained behind at *Jerusalem*, unknown to *Joseph* and his Mother. They Travelled two Days Journey, and sought him among their Kindred and Acquaintance, who were returning Home as well as they, supposing he had been with them; but not finding him, they were extremely troubled, and went back, the Day following, to seek him, and after three Days they found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both Hearing them, and asking them Questions, and rather Teaching than Learning any thing that was in Dispute; insomuch that all that heard him were astonished at his Understanding and Answers. Our blessed Virgin was surprized to see him in that Place and Circumstance, and the Joy which she had to find him, succeeded the Trouble which the loss of him had given her. She gently complain'd of his using them so, saying, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said, How is it that ye sought me, wist ye not that I must be about my Father's Business? And they understood not this saying. Having spoken these Words, he returned with his Parents to *Nazareth*, and was subject to them in all Things. And his Mother kept all these sayings in her Heart.

Thirty and Two Years being past since the Birth of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, of which, as we have said, little is Recorded either in Scripture, Ecclesiastical or Prophane History; *St. Austin*, *St. Chrysostome*, and other Antient Fathers, are of the Opinion, that he bestowed his Time in the common Exercises and Labours of Life thereby to shew him-

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Self true Man, and to demonstrate how much he hated and detested Idleness. But God determining now to draw him out of his concealed State, and to manifest him to the World, he began this, by bringing St. *John Baptist* (who was to be his Messenger) out of the Wilderness, as the Prophets have foretold; he then instantly left his Solitude, where he had led an Angelical Life, *having his Garment of Camels Hair, with a Leather Girdle about his Loins, his Meat being Locusts and Wild-Holy, and appeared on the Banks of the River of Jordan, and in the Wilderness of Judea, Preaching Repentance, and Baptizing all those that came unto him; saying, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the Wilderness, prepare ye the Way of the Lord, make his Paths straight. I indeed Baptize you with Water unto Repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose Shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall Baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire. Whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Flower, & gather his Wheat into his Garner: But he will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire.*

All the Jewish Writers of this time make mention of St. *John the Baptist*, and highly magnify the Brightness of his Virtue, and the Austerity of his Life, so that he needed no Miracles to gain him Belief; for all the People honouring him as something more than a Man, he was judged by some to be the *Messias*, and preferred before all the other Prophets that had formerly appeared. And *Josephus*, that Lived immediately after *Christ's* Days, saith, He was a most excellent Man, who stirred up the Jews to the Exercise of Virtue. When therefore, all *Jerusalem* went thronging into the Desert, to hear this Holy Messenger, and Fore-runner of our Lord and Saviour, and to be Baptized; *Jesus* himself went also, and in Humility, hid himself among the Multitude.

titude, contrary to the Custom of this vain World; seeing Men are apt to use a thousand Arts to distinguish themselves from the rest of Mankind, and to be respected as extraordinary Persons. But when our Lord thus abased himself, God raised him up, and distinguished him from those he had mixed himself with. For tho' St. *John* had never seen him before, yet he acknowledged him to be the *Messias* in the presence of an exceeding great Number of People, and being struck with a profound Respect, could not without difficulty, resolve to put Water on him to Baptize him.

He that caused the chief Doctors of the Law, even the *Sadduces* and *Pharisees* to tremble, when he said, *O Generation of Vipers who hath warned you to Flee from the Wrath to come, &c.* And drove them away from his Baptism, but said unto *Jesus Christ*, *I had need to be Baptized of thee, and comest thou unto me?* Our Lord only Answered, That he must humble himself so far, and that in his present State of Humiliation, he must submit to every Ordinance: For thus saith he, *it becometh us to fulfill all Righteousness.* No sooner was he Baptiz'd, but the Heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit visibly descended on him in Form of a Dove, and rested on his Head. And at the same time a Voice was heard from Heaven, giving this Testimony, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* Our Saviour immediately after retir'd to conceal himself, but St. *John* continued to speak of him to all the People. He endeavoured with much earnestness to persuade Men, that *Jesus Christ* was the *Messias* so often promised, and so greatly desired. And that as to his own particular, he was inconsiderable, plainly and frequently telling them, That he must decrease in his Fame, and be obscured by an infinite surpassing Light: And truly, no one Passage in the Life of our Blessed Saviour, doth more confirm the certainty

Holy J E S U S.

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Certainty of his being the True *Messias*, than that of *St. John Baptist*, whose Wisdom, Learning, and Holiness of Life is recorded, and confess'd by the Writings of all the Enemies of Christianity, should refuse the Honour of being the *Messias*, which was offered to himself, and place it upon *Jesus*; and should likewise direct his own Disciples to follow *Christ*, and embrace his Doctrine, which 'tis very evident he did do, for that of the many Followers and Disciples which he had, not one appear'd ever after, who was not a Christian.

As *St. John the Baptist* seem'd to have nothing more to do in the World, after he had proclaim'd the *Messias*, so the Divine Providence, to take him speedily out of it, made him leave his Solitary Abode in the Desert, and to come to the Court of *Herod*: That Prince who had heard of the Austerity and Excellency of his Life in the Wilderness, respecting him as a *Prophet*, had a great Kindness for him, and heard him gladly. Neither did his Love grow cold for the Freedom that he us'd in Reprehending him for his Incestuous Defilements, in Marrying *Herodias* his Brother's Wife. But the Devil, who could not quietly suffer the Reformation, which perhaps this Excellent Person might have made in the Court of this King, betook himself to his usual Artifices; and envenom'd the Spirit of *Herodias* against him, who soon got him thrown into Prison, till such time as a fit Opportunity presented of doing further Mischief, and Crowning the Life of this Great Man with the Glory of Martyrdom.

Herod's Birth-Day being come, he made a great Feast to all the Grandees of his Court, and the Daughter of the Incestuous *Herodias* Dancing in the Midst of this Assembly, she so extreamly pleas'd *Herod*, that he, at the same time, commanded her to ask of him whatsoever she pleas'd, and he would give it her, tho' it were half of his Kingdom. She

went presently to her Mother, to know what she should demand; who preferring the gratifying her Revēge on St. *John*, above whatever her Ambition of *Covetousness* could desire, enjoined her to ask of him only the Head of *John the Baptist*. *Herod* was much troubled at this Request, as having a great Esteem for him. But the Devil lessening the Reverence he had to this holy Man, and Increasing his fond Affection to *Herodias*, caused him, at length, to yield, that he might not break his Word in the Presence of the Nobility that were with him, and St. *John's* Head was cut off in Prison, and deliver'd to *Herodias's* Daughter in a Charger, who immediately came and brought it to her Mother. Thus truly did this Great Man Die, and thus, at length, ended the high Opinion which *Herod* had of him, who having been the great Admirer of this holy Person, became his Murderer, which *Josepbus* reckons to be the Cause of all the Miseries which fell upon *Herod* and his whole Family in a short time; of which hereafter.

When *Jesus* was Baptized, he began to Preach, and his whole Doctrine was directed to the Manifestation of his Father's Will, and Amendment of Man's Life. It advanceth also to this one Foundation Principle, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Soul, and thy Neighbour as thy self*. It was plain, easie, and convincing, tho' it treated of the highest Mysteries. It had neither Pomp or Eloquence, nor Ostentation, not Flattering the Follies of Wickedness of Man, as many Doctrines of the *Philosophers* do. Neither did it consist in External, Unprofitable Ceremonies as the latter *Jews* had, by their fond Traditions, made the Law of GOD, so that it was of no Effect; neither did it indulge Sensuality, as the *Turkish Alcoran*, and other Law-Givers have done. But all the Gospel of *Jesus* was Simplicity, all was Spirit, Truth, Justice, Holiness, Humility, and Charity. It neither Took away, nor Disannulled
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any one perfect or spiritual Precepts of the Law of *Moses*, but rather Reviv'd, Inforced, Interpreted, and Fulfilled the same. For whereast hat commanded External Observance, *Christ's* Law requires also Internal Obedience. That says, Love your Friends; this adds, Love your Enemies. That forbids us to Kill; this prohibits us from being Angry: That commands us not to commit actual Adultery; this requires us not to Desire, nor Lust after a Woman. That taught thee to offer up a Calf, Sheep, Ox, &c. for thy Sins; this enjoyns thee to offer up a Contrite Heart, by Faith in the Blood of him that Died for All, with a firm and resolute Purpose of Amendment of Life. Briefly, The Doctrines of *Christ* tend only to the true, sincere, and perfect Service of God, thy Lord that Created thee, and Redeemed thee, for the Exaltation of his Holy Name, Power, Goodness, and Glory, to the suppressing of Man's Pride by discovering his Lost and Miserable State by Nature; to the Contempt of the World, and the Poms and Vanities thereof; to the Mortification and Subduing our Carnal Appetites; to true Love and unfeigned Charity toward our Neighbour; to the making us Spiritually Minded; to the procuring to us Peace of Conscience, Tranquility of Soul, Consolation of Spirit, and Purity in the Outward Man: And, in a Word, to reduce Mankind again to a certain State of Innocency, Simplicity, and Angelical Sanctity upon Earth, (so far as Human Infirmary will allow) and to have his Eye fix'd only upon the Kingdom of God in Heaven, and the Eternal Inheritance purchased for all those that truly Love and Fear him. This was the Doctrine delivered by J E S U S, and is the same which the Holy Prophets of Old foretold should be declared to the World by the True *Messiah*.

As for the Life and Conversation of our Blessed Saviour, his greatest Adversaries allow it to be agree-

able to his Doctrine, it being a lively Representation of the Perfections thereof. A Man of such Gravity, as he was never in his Life observed to Laugh; of such Humility, that tho' he was the Son of GOD, yet he scarce had the Dignity of a Servant in this World; of such a sweet and mild Temper, that all the Abuses and Injuries of his Enemies never wrested from him an Angry Word. And was truly such an One as he is describ'd by *Isaiah*, Ch. 42. as aforementioned, *He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his Voice to be heard in the Street; a bruised Reed shall he not break, and the smocking Flax shall he not quench.* And *Zech. 9. 9.* Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, he is Just, and having Salvation, Lowly, &c.

And here I will add the Testimony of a Heathen concerning our Saviour. In the Days of *Tiberius Caesar*, the Governors of the several Provinces used to advertise the Senate of such Occurrences and Accidents as happen'd in their Countries, and *Publius Lentulus* being at that time President of *Judea*, writ the following Epistle to the Senate and People of *Rome*.

There appeared in these our Days a Man of great Vertue, nam'd Jesus Christ, who is yet Living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted for a Prophet of Truth; but his own Disciples call him the Son of God. He raiseth the Dead, and cureth all manner of Diseases, a Man of Stature somewhat Tall and Comely, with a very Reverend Countenance, such as the Beholders may both Love and Fear. His Hair is of the Colour of a Philbert full Ripe, and plain almost down to his Ears, but from the Ears downwards somewhat Curl'd, and more Orient of Colour, waving about his Shoulders. In the midst of his Head goeth a Seam, or Partition of his Hair, after the manner of the Nazarites; his Forehead very plain and smooth; his Face without spot or wrinkle, beautify'd with a Comely,

Cowely Red; his Nose and Mouth so form'd, as nothing can be reprehended; his Beard somewhat thick, agreeable, in Colour, to the Hair of his Head, not of any great Length, but forked in the midst; of an innocent and mature Look; his Eyes grey, clear, and quick. In Reproving he is Terrible; in Admonishing Courteous and Fair-spoken; pleasant in Speech, mix'd with Gravity: It cannot be remember'd, that any have seen him Laugh, but many have seen him Weep: In Proportion of Body, well shaped and streight; his Hands and Arms very delectable to behold; in Speaking, very Temperate, Modest, and Wise; a Man for his singular Beauty surpassing the Children of Men.

I will add to this the Testimony of *Josephus*, a Jew by Nation and Profession, who, in his Antiquities, writes thus: *In these times liv'd Jesus, a very Wise Man, if it be lawful to call him a Man, because, in truth he did marvellous Things; and was Master and Teacher to them that lov'd him, and sought after Truth; the Jews and Gentiles assembled to him, and follow'd him in great Numbers. And tho' he was afterwards accus'd by some of the chief of our Religion, and Crucify'd, yet he was not forsaken of those who before follow'd him; and three Days after his Death, he appear'd alive unto them, according as the Prophets, inspired by God, had foretold and prophecy'd of him: And now even in our Days, the Doctrine and the Name of Christians continues, and is spread over all the World. These are the Words of Josephus, who writ the History of the Destruction of Jerusalem, of which he was an Eye-witness, but Forty Years after the Death of Christ.*

Yea, the Devils themselves could not but confess the Piety and Holiness of the *Messias*, which was fulfilled in the Person of Christ; and is evident by the Testimony of *Porphyrie*, a profess'd Enemy to the Christian Name, who after consideration of divers Oracles utter'd by his Idols concerning Christ, broke forth in-

to this Confession: *It is exceeding wonderful to think what Witness the Gods do give of the Vertue and Sanctity of Jesus, for which they affirm he was rewarded with Immortality, but yet these Christians are deceiv'd in calling him a God.*

The Miracles of our Lord are next to be consider'd, whereof *Josephus* gives some Intimation; and which *Isaiah* Prophecy'd of long before, Chap. 35. *The Eyes of the Blind shall be open'd, the Lame shall Leap, the Dumb shall sing, &c.* Which Wonders were likewise very particularly revealed to the Gentiles by the *Sibills* aforementioned; one of whom, as *Lactantius* Recordeth, writ thus of *Jesus Christ*; *He shall do all Things by his Word only; he shall cure all infirmities; he shall raise the Dead; he shall make the Lame to run and skip; the Deaf shall hear; the Blind shall see; and the Dumb shall speak; with Five Loaves and Two Fishes, Five Thousand People shall be satisfy'd, and the Fragments shall fill Twelve Baskets, to the Joy of many; he shall command the Winds, and walk upon the Furious Seas with his Feet of Peace, &c.* And after divers other Greek Verses to this Purpose, she concluded thus; *Men may say, that I am a mad and lying Prophetess, but when all these things come to pass, then let them remember, that I am no Deceiver, but rather the Prophet of the Great God.*

The Rabbies among the Jews likewise declare in their *Talmud*, that the *Messiah* shall do wonderful Miracles when he cometh, to which all those of former Saints and Prophets are not to be compar'd. Yea, some of the Jews Record several miraculous Things done by *Jesus* in their *Talmud*, and other Books, which are not mentioned by the Evangelists: Likewise that Grand Impostor *Mahomet* affirms in his *Alcoran*, 'That *Jesus*, the Son of *Mary*, was a great Prophet, 'and wrought many Miracles, only by the Power 'and Spirit of God; and that he himself was sent to 'confirm the Doctrine of *Jesus*, saving only in the 'Point

Point of his God-head, since, in declaring himself to be God, *Jesus* went too far, for which God checked him when he came to Heaven. Thus do these Enemies of Christianity confess the Miracles of our Lord, and therefore their Testimony is the more considerable; tho' if they should deny the same, there is abundant Evidence thereof, and there are undeniable Reasons for the Confirmation of it, particularly in these two Instances, wherein I hope to leave no room for Infidelity.

The first is, The Calling and Retaining of his Disciples and Followers (which *Josephus* likewise acknowledges to be very Miraculous) these Men were of several Callings, States, and Conditions in the World, and yet in an Instant, they left Father, Mother, Wives, Children, and all other Temporal Concerns, and followed *Jesus*, who had nothing to bestow upon them, and promis'd them only Blessings in the World to come, who never flatter'd them, nor Preach'd any other Doctrine but what was repugnant to Flesh and Blood, as appears by their own Writings and Testimony of him, who was accounted a Disturber of the State by the *Scribes, Pharisees*, and Rulers of the World, who had neither Friends to Defend and Countenance him, nor a House wherein to lay his Head. And yet that Worldly-Minded Men and Women, great Sinners, and lewd Persons, should leave all their Earthly Enjoyments to follow him, notwithstanding the many Losses, Dangers, and Inconveniences which they were subject to; and should not forsake him in all his Troubles and Afflictions, yea, should joyfully lay down their Lives, rather than Abandon him, and in Defence of his Doctrine; this, I say, is such a Miracle, as the like was never before seen in the World, and must needs be allowed to be done by the mighty Power of God, and the vigorous Operations of his Blessed Spirit.

The second Point is, the Facts and Acts performed by *Jesus*, above all Human Power and Ability, in the open View of the *Jews*, and Multitudes of other Persons who were Witnesses there; and are related by the Evangelists and Apostles in the New Testament, to manifest the Divinity of our Blessed Lord, and that the exact Accomplishment of all the Prophecies and Promises concerning the true *Messias* concentered in his Person. I shall therefore proceed to give a brief Account of the stupendious Miracles wrought by *Christ* successively, as he performed them. 1. The first Miracle was, his changing Water into Wine at a Marriage in *Cana*. 2. The miraculous Draught of Fishes in the Sea of *Galilee*. 3. His curing *Peter's* Wife's Mother of a Fever, only by touching her Hand. 4. His casting out Evil Spirits with his Word, and Healing all that were Sick of divers Diseases at *Capernaum*. 5. His Healing all manner of Sicknes, and all manner of Diseases and Torments, and those which were possess'd with Devils, and those which were Lunatick, or had the Pally, throughout all *Galilee*. 6. His Curing of a Leper, at the same place, with a touch of his Hand. 7. His Healing a Paralytick at *Capernaum*, the House being uncover'd to let him down in his Bed, whom he cured only by his Word, in the Presence of many *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. 8. His Healing a Man with a Wither'd Hand on the *Sabbath-Day*, by only Bidding him stretch forth his Hand. 9. His Healing of a Leper, only touching him after his Sermon on the Mount. 10. His Curing the *Centurion's* Servant at *Capernaum*, of a Dropsie, with his Word only, without Coming to him, or Seeing of him. 11. His Raising to Life the Widow's Son of the City of *Naim*, by only Bidding the Dead Carcase Arise. 12. His Dispossessing a Legion of Devils out of a Man in the Country of the *Gergasenes*, who Entering into a Herd of Swine, they ran violently

violently into the Sea and were drowned. 13. A Woman who had an Issue of Blood Twelve Years, is heal'd by Touching his Garment. 14. He restores the Daughter of *Jairus*, the Ruler of the Synagogue, to Life, only by taking her by the Hand, and bidding her Arise. 15. He restores two Blind Men to their Sight, only by touching their Eyes. 16. He dispossesseth a Dumb Devil out of a Man at *Caper-natum*. 17. He feeds Five Thousand Men, besides Women and Children, with Five Loaves and Two Fishes in *Galilee*, and afterwards Twelve Baskets full of Fragments were taken up. 18. He walks upon the Sea in a Tempest, and coming into the Ship, the Winds and Waves instantly ceas'd, and the Ship was immediately at Land. 19. He casts a Devil out of the Daughter of the Woman of *Canzan*, with his Word. 20. He cures one Deaf and Dumb at the Sea of *Galilee*. 21. He feeds Four Thousand Men there, besides Women and Children, with Seven Loaves and a few small Fishes, Seven Baskets full of Fragments being taken up. 22. He heals a Blind Man at *Beth-saida*, by Spitting upon his Eyes, and putting his Hands upon him. 23. He casteth a Devil out of a Lunatick Man at *Casarea* by his Word, which his Disciples were not able to do, because of their Unbelief. 24. He casts out a Dumb Devil at *Jerusalem*, and confirms it to be done by a Divine Power. 25. He cures one Born Blind, by Anointing his Eyes with Clay and Spittle, and bidding him go and Wash in the Pool of *Siloam*, near *Jerusalem*. 26. He heals one of the Dropsie beyond *Jordan*, on the *Sabbath-Day*, and justifies the doing thereof against the Lawyers and *Pharisees*. 27. He heals Ten Lepers at *Samaria*, only bidding them go shew themselves to the Priest. 28. He raiseth *Lazarus* after he had been Dead Four Days, and bury'd. 29. He cures a Blind Beggar, near *Jericho*, with a Word. 30. He heals an Impotent Man at the Pool of *Beth-saida*.

Jaïda, who had an Infirmary Thirty Eight Years, bidding him take up his Bed and walk. 31. He restor'd Three Blind Men to their Sight near *Jericho*.

These and several other Miraculous Works were performed by *Jesus*, and were written by some of the Evangelists in the *Hebrew* Tongue, while yet the Persons were Alive upon whom they were wrought, as to Instance in a few of those before-mentioned, the raising of *Lazarus* in *Bethany*, which was but two Miles from *Jerusalem*, at whole Death and Burial also, he being a Gentleman, several *Scribes* and *Pharisees* must needs be present, according to the *Jewish* Custom of that Age, as is related by *Josephus*; now these saw him both Deceased, Interred, and were at the Funeral-Feast made for him; and these very Persons saw him again likewise after he was by *Christ* raised from the Dead, having lain four Days in the Grave; with whom they did both Eat and Drink, and Converse, after his return to Life, and might behold him Daily, walking openly in the Streets of *Jerusalem*: How then could this Story be invented and feigned, if it had not been true? So likewise the raising of *Fairus's* Daughter is confirmed by so many Circumstances, that they make the matter fully evident. The raising of the Widow's Son at the Gates of the City of *Naim*, in the Presence of all the People that were then present. The healing of the Cripple at *Jerusalem*, who had lain Thirty Eight Years Lame, at the side of the Pool, or Bath, called *Probatika*, in the View of a great Number of People. The casting a Legion of Devils out of a Man, who for many Years, was publickly known to live possess'd in the Mountains, which Devils, by peculiar License, obtain'd by *Jesus* to enter into an Herd of Swine, who instantly drove Two Thousand of them into the Sea, and drowned them; upon which, the whole Country being affrighted, humbly intreated him to depart out of their Coasts.

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The Feeding so many Thousands with a few Loaves and Fishes. The turning Water into Wine at *Cana*, in the Presence of all the Company. The Healing of a Man of an incurable Dropsie, at the Table of a *Pharisee* of Quality, and in the Sight of all that were at the Feast with him.

These and several other Miracles, which were wrought in the Presence of so great a Number of Spectators, and recorded by our Evangelists at that Time, when many endeavour'd to Discredit them, as they might easily have done by many Witnesses, if any one Part of them had been false or doubtful; this I say, may fully convince all Deists, and Unbelievers of the Reality of them, and therefore, since all these Things were Supernatural, and could not be done but by the Aid and Power of the Almighty, it is impossible that God should assist, or countenance any Falshood, who is not like *Man that he should lie*; and consequently, it must needs be, that what *Jesus* affirm'd of himself, That he was the Son of God, and the True and Only *Messias*, was, by these Miracles, clearly manifested to be so indeed: And to which he appeals in his Discourse to the Faithless *Pharisee*, St. *John* Ch. 10. *If I do not the Work of my Father, believe me not: But if I do, tho' ye believe not me, believe the Works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him*: And tho', for this saying, his Enemies sought to take him, yet many resorted to him, and said, *John did no Miracles; but all things that John spake of this Man were true: And many believed on him at that time*. And the *Pharisees* were so sensible of the mighty Effects of these Miracles, that when they observ'd, with Sorrow, the Fame which our Saviour had obtain'd by raising *Lazarus* from the Dead, they assembled to deliberate what to do. For if we let this Man go on, say they, in this Manner, *All the People will believe on him*.

As to the other Passages of our Saviour's Life, we Read, 1. That, as soon as he was Baptized, he shew'd all the Faithful, by his own Example, that after they had once enter'd into the Christian State, they ought to prepare for Suffering and Temptations. For withdrawing into the Desert, or rather being led there by the Holy Spirit, and having fasted Forty Days and Forty Nights, he was tempted by the Devil, who said unto him, *If thou art the Son of God, command these Stones to be made Bread.* To whom Jesus answer'd by this Place of Scripture, *That Man does not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* This did not discourage the Prince of Darkness, but carrying our Saviour from thence, he transported him to the Top of a Pinnacle of the Temple, bidding him, if he were the Son of God, to cast himself down to the Ground; and maliciously Abusing the Holy Scripture, he added; *For it is Written, God hath given his Angels Charge over thee, and in their Hands shall they bear thee up, lest at any Time thou dash thy Foot against a Stone.* The Son of God answered the Tempter, with the same Simplicity as before, by a Passage of Scripture. *Thou shalt not Tempt the Lord thy God.* This prudent Answer confounded the Pride of the Devil, and strongly provok'd him; and whereas before, he had treated our Lord as the Son of God, he would now have him to worship him as God, and to persuade him to this, *He took him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and shew'd him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them in a Moment, and saith, all these Things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me; for that is deliver'd unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it.* Jesus answer'd, *Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is Written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* This answer put the Devil to Flight, and the Angels came and minister'd unto him.

2. Nicodemus

2. *Nicodemus*, a considerable Man among the *Jews*, being much concerned at what he had heard related of our Saviour, resolved to be informed of the Truth; but foreseeing, by human Prudence, that this New Prophet would meet with great Enemies, he thought it safest to go by Night; and being come, told him that he really believed he was a Teacher sent from God, since no Man could do such Miracles unless God were with him. *Jesus* answered, *Except a Man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* *Nicodemus* understood these Words in a Natural Sense, but *Jesus* explained it to him, and reasoned within him about the marvellous Effects of the Holy Spirit; and made this learned Man comprehend the difficulty of Convincing and Believing them; and that we must lay aside those foolish Reasonings which will admit of nothing but Objects of Sense. He ended this Conversation by Discoveries to him of the great Love of God to Man, who had given them his own Son to make them Eternally Happy; and that the Misery of Man was, that he loved *Darkness rather than Light.* He dismissed this Ruler of the *Jews* with such Convictions, that it appeared this Entertainment was not Fruitless, the powerful Word of God having made such Impressions upon him, that he who at first seem'd fearful of coming to our Saviour, had the Courage, afterwards, to maintain, publicly, his Innocency in a full Council, and to declare at his Death, and after it, that he would have no part in the Injustice committed on his Person, when they made him suffer so cruel and shameful a Death; and so far was his Love from being lessen'd to our Lord then, that on the contrary, it seem'd to Embalm his Body, when it was to be lay'd in the Sepulchre.

3. Our Saviour, for avoiding, a while, the Malice of the *Pharisees*, who had Counsell'd *Herod* to throw *St. John the Baptist* in Prison, left *Judea*, and

The History of the

and returned into *Galilee*, where he met with a *Samaritan* Woman, who was coming to draw Water from a Well, near which *Christ* was sitting, who ask'd for some Water to quench that Thirst which the tirefomeness of the Way had caused in him. The Woman seem'd astonish'd that a *Jew* should ask Water of her a *Samaritan*, which were a People extremely abhorr'd by the *Jews*. *Jesus* answered, That if she knew the Gift of God, and who it was that asked Drink of her, she would have asked of him, and he would have given her Living-Water, which should never cease to refresh her, till she had attained Eternal Life. The Woman at length began to grow attentive to what he said, and being surpriz'd at what our Saviour told her concerning her past Life, she knew thereby he was a Prophet. He made known to her all the Mysteries of the New Law, which is the Worship of God in Spirit and Truth; and carry'd off her fond Devotion from the Temple and the Holy Mountain, in both which Places the *Jews* and *Samaritans* also, placed most Holiness, and shew'd that the true Churches are not built with Hands, nor made of Stone, but that God's Temples are the Hearts of the Faithful, wherein he continually resides by his Holy Spirit. The Woman reply'd, That the *Messias* would come and Teach them all Things: *Jesus* answered, *I am He*: Whereupon she went into the Town, and informed the People of what she had heard, who went out to him, and entreated him to enter into their City, where he stay'd three Days.

4. Our Saviour drawing many Disciples after him, chose out of this Number Twelve Persons, whom he design'd to be the Foundation of his Church in future Ages, honouring them with the Title of Apostles, as being to be sent to Preach his Name and Gospel throughout the World, who had this Advantage above the rest, that they were as it were.

were his Domesticks, and lived with him in the same House ; for we know that he kept the Passover and eat the Lamb with them alone ; so that they were true Witnesses, not only of his Actions and publick preachings, but of his private Life and Secrets, after he had discoursed to others in Parables. Having made this Choice, he led them up to a Mountain, being followed by a great Multitude of People ; and then he made that famous Discourse, called, *The Sermon in the Mount* ; in the Beginning whereof, having overthrown all the Judgments of Men, and all the Notices of natural Reason, in calling those Happy that the World esteems Miserable ; namely, the Poor, the Mourners, the Persecuted, &c. He then shews how inconsiderable the Ordinances of the *Jewish* Law are, in comparison of the Precepts of the Gospel ; plainly telling them, That he required of his Disciples such a Righteousness, as far exceeded that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, without which he declar'd, they could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. He taught us, by these Words, that it is not sufficient to abstain from Things apparently evil in the sight of others, nor with doing seeming good Works before Men, this being common to the *Pharisees* ; and therefore enjoyns us to *lay up Treasures in Heaven, and not on Earth, lest our Heart be where our Treasure is* ; that we must not divide our selves between *Christ* and the World ; but *seek only the Kingdom of Heaven, and all other things shall be given unto us*. Which clearly manifests, that the End of the New Law is to give a New Heart to the New Man, because our outward Actions must be regulated by the inward Principles of our Minds ; for the River cannot be pure if the Fountain be corrupted.

Christ then proceeds to recommend the Love of our Enemies, by which he saith, we become like to his Father, who causeth his Sun to shine both upon the

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Just and the Unjust. He then insists upon the Precept of not Judging one another, to which there is Natural Inclination in Mens Hearts, and therefore he Cautions us against it, by saying, we are *like to a Man that having a Beam in his own Eye, would pull out a Mote out of his Brother's.* The World is full of Offences of this kind, say the Fathers, but the best Remedy is Humility: The having low Thoughts of our selves, will hinder us from entertaining of mean Thoughts of others, especially if we remember that Day wherein *Jesus Christ* shall come to Judge the smallest Defects, who assures us, he will give the same Weight and Measure we have given to others, saying, *Judge not, lest ye be Judged.*

5. But bare discourses being not sufficient to work a Reformation in the generallity of Men, our Saviour, therefore, would bring them to it by a Famous Example, which was that of *Mary Magdalen.* This great Sinner, moved by the Divine Grace, came running to *Jesus Christ*, as the only Physician of her Soul, and therefore, knowing that he was in the House of *Simon the Pharisee*, she came thither with an holy Boldness, and, without Blushing at so many Witnesses as were then present, threw herself at his Feet, Embrac'd them, Kissed them, Washed them with her Tears, Wiped them with the Hair of her Head, and Anointed them with a Rich Ointment. This Woman being Infamous for her Irregular Life, *Simon* began to doubt whether *Christ* was a True Prophet, seeing he knew not what she was, which if he had, he thought he would have rejected her; and not suffered her to touch him: But our Lord confounded this vain Imagination, declaring how much he preferred the fervent Love of this Sinner to the Lukewarmness of those that had not committed such great Crimes; and having shewed, that the multitude of her Sins was forgiven her, because she loved much, he sent her away in Peace. This

so admirable a Conversion, may be call'd the Glory of Repentance, for it shews that the greatest Sinner becomes pure in the Sight of God, when his Repentance is sanctify'd by Humility; and on the contrary, that the Chastest Soul is Impure in his Sight, when this Heavenly Gift, which should render him the most humble of Men, does, on the contrary, make him proud.

6. After the Miracles of the Loaves, with Five of which, and two Fishes, our Saviour fed Five Thousand Men, besides Women and Children, the People would needs lay hold of him, and make him a King by Force, whereupon he made his Disciples enter into a Ship, and pass the Sea, *while he sent the Multitude away*; that the Tempest which soon after happen'd might make them sensible of their Weakness in the Absence of their Master, and that this Knowledge might make them Humble. He left them, for some time, in the midst of the Waves, being driven up and down the whole Night by a great Storm, without the Hastening to deliver them: But when the Day appear'd, he drew towards them; Walking on the Surface of the Water; the Disciples seeing him Coming on the Floods, as on dry Land, thought him a Spirit, and cry'd out for Fear. But our Saviour bid them not to fear; and the first that felt the Efficacy of this Divine Word was St. Peter, whose Heart being full of Assurance, said to him, *If it be thou, Lord, command me to come upon the Waters to thee*: Our Lord bid him come, and he immediately leap'd into the Sea, with a Confidence which cannot be sufficiently admir'd; but a great Wind arising, Fear over-whelm'd his Spirits, and his Faith failing, he began immediately to Sink. Then did he address himself to our Saviour, who had already given him some Power, Intreating him to succour him. *Jesus* stretching out his Hand, took hold of him, and Blaming the Weakness of his Faith, bid

bid him not be afraid, and when they were enter'd into the ship, the Wind instantly ceas'd, and they were presently at Land; which Miracles caus'd those in the ship to come and worship him, saying, *Of a Truth Thou art the Son of God*; being wonderfully amaz'd at what happen'd.

7. Our Saviour leaving *Judea* to avoid the Rage of his Enemies, who began openly to declare themselves against him, departed to the Coasts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*; where a *Caanitish* Woman came, by a secret Instinct to *Christ*, who Calling to him, tho' unknown, she declared with great Cries, that her Daughter was tormented with a Devil, and entreated him to have Pity on her: But our Lord, tho' Compassionate to others, seem'd Deaf to this Woman's Complaints, that in her Person, and by her Example, he might discover to us the Prevalency of Prayer and Humility, in Persevering therein, when the Almighty seems not to hear, but to reject our Petitions. This humble Woman being not able to obtain any Thing of *Jesus Christ*, address'd her self to the Apostles, who interceded for her: *Christ* answer'd, *He was only sent to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*. And to try the strength of her Faith, would not yet yield, when at length she came up to him, and Casting her self at his Feet, worshipp'd him, Imploring his Assistance with great Lamentation. Our Lord still repell'd her, and using her as a Dog, said, *It was not lawful to give the Children's Bread to Dogs*. She confess'd indeed she was a Dog, but that the Dogs were permitted to eat the Crumbs which fell from the Children's Table, and she desir'd no more. This humble Confession, after such harsh Treatment, in Appearance, made our Saviour immediately cry out, *O Woman, great is thy Faith!* and Changing his Roughness into Admiration thereof, he immediately granted what she desir'd.

8. Our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, being alone with his Disciples, and having passed with them over most of the Cities of *Casarea*, he asked them, what the World said of him: They answered, some thought he was *John the Baptist*, others *Elias*, and others *Jehoiada*, or one of the Ancient Prophets. And you, my Lord, who think you that I am? St. Peter, without Hesitating, answered, *Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God*. Christ called him Blessed, because his Father had revealed to him this Truth, and assured him, that he would so firmly establish his Church upon this Confession, that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against it. Eight Days after, Christ took three of his Disciples, namely, *Peter, James and John*, (who ever seemed to be the chiefest favourites, and to whom he shewed most Tender-ness) and led them up to a high Mountain apart, and when he had prayed there, his Countenance shined like the Sun, and his Garments were as white as Snow. At the same time *Moses and Elias* appear'd, and Discours'd with *Jesus* about what was to happen at *Jerusalem*, during which the Disciples fell asleep, but waking, were surpriz'd at the Glory of our Lord, and the Sight of the two Prophets, and St. Peter being over-joy'd, propos'd to build three Tabernacles, when instantly a Voice was heard from a Cloud, saying, *This is my beloved Son, hear ye him*. The Disciples fell to the Ground with Astonishment, but *Jesus* bid them arise, and not be afraid, and then they saw none but Christ only, who charged them to tell no Body what they had seen and heard. This Transfiguration was one of the Means which our Saviour used to strengthen the Faith of his Disciples; and by this anticipation of his Glory, to shew what they themselves should be at the Resurrection of the Dead, and that after all the Labours, Tryals and Sufferings of his Life, they should certainly enjoy that Glory of which they had now been Eye Witnesses; and 'twas

this Sight which made them strong in the greatest Conflicts, Troubles, and Tribulations.

9. When they were come down from the Mount, our Lord found his Disciples encompass'd with a great Crowd of People, attempting to cast an Evil Spirit out of a young Man, which they were not able to effect; *Christ*, with a Word perform'd the Cure, and tells them, their Unbelief was the Cause they could not do it. He then Orders *St. Peter* to pay the Tribute-Money, teaching us thereby to submit to the Laws of the Place where we Live, and to obey Magistrates, if they require nothing Sinful. And now finding that the Disciples had been Discoursing in the Way about Preheminence, to remove all such proud Conceptions and Desires out of their Minds, he took a little Child, and placed him in the midst, saying, That if they did not endeavour to be like that, they could not enter into Heaven: The Antients have much reflected on this Saying, and considering how difficult this is to the proud Spirit of Man, their only Hope has been in the Grace and Assistance of Him who uttered this Sentence.

10. *Christ* retiring to the Mount of Olives to Pray, came early in the Morning to the Temple, where a great Number of People surrounded him. But whilst he was Preaching, the *Pharisees* laid a Snare for him, by presenting him with a Woman taken in Adultery; to the end, that if he Condemned her to Die, he might be decry'd by the People as a Man extreme severe; and if he did not, then to charge him as a Breaker of God's Law. *Jesus*, knowing their Malice, stoop'd down, and wrote upon the Ground; and they persisting to know his Opinion, he lifted up his Head, and said, *He amongst you that is without Sin cast the first Stone at her.* Then he went on to write upon the Ground; and the *Pharisees* being convicted in their own Consciences, silently withdrew, so that the Woman was left alone, whom our Saviour

our asked, Where her Accusers were, and if any Man had condemn'd her? Who answering, *No; Neither,* said he, *do I condemn thee, Sin no more:* And so sent her Home in Peace, whereby our Lord shews, that he would rather have Men Condemn themselves, than Accuse others, and to Examine their own Lives rather than to Censure the Faults of their Brethren. The Mildness wherewith our Saviour treated this Woman, had perhaps a great Effect to disengage her from this evil Course, than all the Severities of the Law; nothing being more prevalent upon a good Nature, than Meekness and Gentleness, where they expect Rigour and Severity.

II. Our blessed Lord did not only select Twelve Apostles, but likewise Seventy Two Disciples, whom he sent by Two and Two before him, wheresoever he was to go. To these he gave Power to cast out Devils, at which they extreamly rejoiced; but he tells them, It ought to be a greater Joy to them, that their Names were writ in Heaven. After which he went into a Village, where a Woman, named *Martha*, receiv'd him; she had a Sister nam'd *Mary*, who lying at our Saviour's Feet, heard attentively his Holy Word, whilst *Martha* was busy in making Preparations for his Entertainment. And being dissatisfy'd that her Sister did not help her, complain'd thereof to *Christ*, who told *Martha*, that while she was imploy'd about several Matters, *Mary had chosen the better Part, which should never be taken from her.* Thus, though the External Acts of Charity are necessary in this World; yet those who, by Divine Providence, are placed in such a State of Life, that they are wholly employ'd in Spiritual Exercises and Contemplations, are certainly in the most happy Condition. Nothing appears more becoming, than to prepare fit Entertainment for our Lord himself, and yet he prefers the Repose of *Mary*, before the Carefulness of *Martha*.

11. *Jesus drawing near Jericho, Zacheus, a Publican, of a mean Stature, being desirous to see him, got up into a Sycamore-Tree in the Way, which our Saviour perceiving, bid him come down, for he would abide that Day in his Houle. Zacheus readily obeying, immediately came down, and received him gladly; tho' the People murmured, because the Master, (for the Odioulness of his Profession being a Tax-Gatherer, who were counted Extortioners) was in Contempt, called a Sinner: But Zacheus being thoroughly Converted, renouncing from that very Moment his past Life, came and presented himself to our Lord, saying, with an humble Confidence, and gracious Liberality, That he would now Distribute half of his Goods to the Poor, and with the rest make Restitution fourfold. Our Saviour having heard this holy Resolution, said, That this Day Salvation was come to his House, and that this Man, whom the Jews could not but regard with horror, was of the number of Abraham's Children, and better than a great many of themselves. The Gospel hereby shews us, That we must always begin our Conversation, by removing the greatest Obstacles, such as are Restitution of Goods, or good Name; for when the Darling or Beloved Sin is parted with, all the rest fall of Course: And it appears hereby, that God sooner pardons Offences against himself, than those committed against our Neighbours.*

12. *Jesus Christ having left Jericho, after the Conversation of Zacheus, advanc'd towards Jerusalem, and came to Bethany, where Mary the Sister of Lazarus, (who was raised from the Dead) received him and made him a Supper. While they sat at Table, Mary took Oyntment of Spicknard, which was of great Value, and anointed our Saviour's Feet, and wiped them with her Hair, which Judas, who bore the Bag, was angry at, saying, it might have been sold for 300 Pence, and given to the Poor;*

poor; but *Jesus* commended the Action, saying, she had done it against the day of his Burial, and that they had the Poor always with them, but him they had not. Next Morning, *Christ* being near *Jerusalem*, sent his disciples to a Neighbouring Village, to bring him an Ass with its Foal, and to tell the Owners, That *the Lord hath need of him*. Then they spread their Garments on the Ass, and set *Christ* thereon, as it is written, *Fear not, Daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh lowly, Sitting on an Ass, &c.* When immediately all the People, who were come to *Jerusalem* on Account of the *Passover*, hearing that he was about entering the City, they took Branches of Palms in their Hands, and went afore him with loud Acclamations; some threw their Garments, and others strew'd the Ground with Boughs of Trees, and cry'd before him, *Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel; Hosanna in the Highest, Peace in Heaven, and Glory in the Highest.* These Applauses of the People still more enrag'd his Enemies, and the *Pharisees* said, That for the Miracle of Raising *Lazarus*, and his other great Works, the World was gone after him, and they could prevail nothing, and desir'd *Jesus* to rebuke his disciples, who told them, That if they should hold their Peace, the Stones would cry out: Thus did our Saviour triumph before-hand, as he died before-hand in the last supper, and hereby shews us the real Power he was to gain on Men's Hearts, by the Merits of his Death, and by the Glory of his Resurrection.

13. When *Jesus* drew near to *Jerusalem*, the Joy of his Triumph could not hinder him from shedding Tears at the Prospect of these Miseries which would soon come upon this Unhappy City, as a Punishment for the shedding of his Blood, which they were now ready to do; and because they had not known the Time of *G O D's* merciful

Visitation. He at length enter'd into *Jerusalem*, which was all in a Tumult, every one asking, Who it was that come after that Manner? *Jesus* went immediately into the Temple of God, and finding Buyers and Sellers there, he drove them thence, threw down all the Tables of the Money-Changers, and the Seats of the Dove-sellers, saying, *It is written, my House shall be called an House of Prayer, and ye have made it a Den of Thieves.* And the Blind and the Lame coming to him, he healed them. The Chief-Priests hearing the People cry, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, and seeing these wonderful Things, were sore displeased, and said unto him, *Hearest thou what these say?* *Jesus* answered, *Yes; Have ye never read, out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise;* and then our Saviour left them, and went to *Bethany*, and lodged there.

These are the principal Actions of our Saviour recorded in the Holy Scriptures, except his frequent Preaching and Discoursing in Parables, of which it may be necessary to say something.

St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark* do both affirm, that *Jesus* spake to the Multitude in Parables, and without a Parable spake he not to them. St. *Matth.* 13. 3, 4. St. *Mark* 4. 33. Which must be understood, that at the Time which these Words relate to, he spake to the Multitude, and also to his Disciples in Parables and dark Sayings, covering Divine and Spiritual Truths, under fit and proper Similitudes. And at this Time he deliver'd himself wholly in this manner to them; tho' at many other Times he spake more plainly to them, as in his Sermon on the Mount, and in several other Instances. I shall therefore give a brief Account of the Parables uttered by him, and their Signification as they were explain'd by him to his Disciples.

1. The first Parable is of the Sower of Seed, part of which fell among Thorns, and was trodden under-Foot, and eaten by the Fowls; which signify'd those who

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who hear the Word of G O D, and from whose Hearts the Devil at the same time comes and takes it away, lest they should Believe and be Saved: Some fell upon Stony-Ground, which not being able to take Root, soon withers at the Sun's appearance; and, *these are those*, saith our Saviour, *who hear the Word with Gladness*, but taking no Root, are discompos'd and lost, at the least Affliction or Persecution which may happen, because of the Gospel. The third Part of the Seed falls among Thorns, which grows up with the good Grain and Chokes it; these are those that hear the Word, but the Cares and Troubles of the World, the Deceitfulness of Riches, and a great many Inordinate Desires and Affections, render it fruitless. The Fourth part falls on good Ground, which soon springs up, and brings forth Fruit, tho' not all alike; some Grains yielding One hundred Fold for One, others Sixty, others Thirty. These Persons are those, whose Hearts are very good, and are Christians indeed.

2. Another Parable he put forth, St. Matthew 13. saying, *The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a Man, who sowed good Seed; but while his Men slept, the Enemy came and sowed Tares among the Wheat; which springing up, was perceived by the Servants, who would have gathered them up; but he commanded they should grow together till Harvest, lest they might Root up the Wheat with the Tares, and that then he would gather in the Wheat, and burn the Tares.* Another Parable was, *That the Kingdom of Heaven was like a Grain of Mustard-Seed, which was the least of all Seeds, yet grew to be a great Tree.* Another Parable was, *That the Kingdom of Heaven was like Leaven a little of which Leaveneth the whole Lump.* The first of these our Saviour explains, saying, *He that Soweth the good Seed, is the Son of Man; the Field is the World; the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom; but the Tares are the Chil-*

dren of the Wicked One; the Enemy that sowed them, the Devil, the Harvest is the End of the World; and the Reapers are the Angels. As therefore the Tares are gathered and burnt in the Fire, so shall it be at the End of this World; the Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all Things that offend, and them which do Iniquity: And shall put them into a Furnace of Fire, there shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth, &c. The other two Parables of the Grain of Mustard-Seed, and the Leaven, are not explained by our Saviour, because the Disciples readily understood the meaning of them without an Interpreter. The Scope of both is, to signify the Success of the Gospel all over the World, that they might not be discouraged at the little Progress it made at present; being but like a Grain of Mustard-Seed, which the Naturalists tell us, in the Hot Countries, produceth Branches, that, as 'tis said here, *the Birds of the Air come and make Nests therein.* And by naming three Measures of Meal, our Saviour certainly design'd to hint at the small Number of the *Jews* that believed in him, but foretold a greater Harvest, and that the Heathen should entertain the Gospel, and the Sound thereof should go to the Ends of the Earth. He then uttered two Parables more, comparing the Kingdom of Heaven to a *Treasure in a Field*, which, when a Man hath found, he hides, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth it. Again, *The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Merchant seeking goodly Pearls: Who when he had found one Pearl of great Price, sold all he had, and bought it.* Both these Parables have the same tendency; namely, to inform us, 1. That *Christ* and his Grace are of a great and transcendent Value. 2. That under the Gospel, there is a clear Discovery of these Things to the World. 3. That where this Discovery is effectually made to any Person, he will part with all he is worth

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rather than mills of *Christ*, and his Grace and Glory. The last Parable we meet with in this Chapter, is, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a Net cast into the Sea, which gather'd of every kind, and the Good were put into Vessels, and the Bad cast away; so (saith our Saviour) it shall be at the End of the World, &c. The Net is the Word of God, which is cast into the Sea of the World, gathering in many of every kind, to an outward Profession; but at the Day of Judgment there shall be a perfect Difference between such as received the Truth in the Love of it, and others, the former shall be taken into Heaven, and the latter thrown into Hell.

3. Another Parable he spake in Answer to a Jewish Doctor, who ask'd him, Who are our Neighbours? *Christ* says, *A Man going from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among Thieves, who stript him, and wounded him, leaving him half dead; a Priest coming by, saw him, but pass'd on the other side. A Levite did the same, both shewing that great Vertues are not inherent to the highest Offices, and that a Man may have the Dignities of the Church, without the Charity that should accompany them. After this, a Samaritan, that is, a Pagan and Idolater, took Compassion on him, bound up his Wounds, putting in Oyl and Wine, carry'd him upon his Beast to the Inn, and left Money to discharge what he wanted. Our Saviour demanding who of these was his Neighbour; the Doctor was oblig'd to confess, he that had Compassion on him. Go then, saith *Christ*, and do likewise.* This Parable instructs us, that we should be always ready to succour People in Misery, and to spare neither Care, Pains, nor Cost, when our Charity is required; which this Priest and Levite being destitute of, their seeming Compassion was rather Cruelty than Mercy.

4. Two Brethren having a Controversy about an Inheritance, intreat our Saviour to accord it, who from thence, takes Occasion to warn, to take

care of Covetousness, and to assure them that Man's Life does not consist in the Abundance of what he possesseth; which he explains by the Parable of a Rich Man, who had so much Corn, that he knew not where to put it, and was busily Contriving how to enjoy himself, saying, *Soul, take thine Ease, Eat, Drink, and be Merry, for thou hast Goods laid up for many Years.* And was pulling down his Barns, and building bigger to hold all his Fruit; but at that very Instant, God said unto him; *Thou Fool, this Night shall thy Soul be taken away from thee, and then whose shall these Things be?* Such Fools are all those that lay up Earthly, and disregard Heavenly Riches. It is a general Observation, that many Rich Men count all those Fools that cannot get Estates, and be as Wealthy as themselves; but the Poor are no where call'd Fools, nor are any Woes pronounced against them in the Book of GOD, tho' we read of many against the Rich; so that these Rich Fools are only Wise and Happy in their own Conceits, but not in GOD's Account.

5. The Ramble of the Prodigal Son, who having wasted all his Substance in Riot, was yet upon his Return to his Father, receiv'd with all manner of Love and Endearment, is spoken by our Blessed Lord to inform us, what Bowels of Compassion the Father of Mercies expresses to those that truly Repent and Return to him: And indeed, the Marks of a real Conversion are here admirably express'd: The Son sees his Misery, and leaves his evil Course; he returns to his Father, and gives himself to him. Let us also forsake Sin, and turn to GOD; let us be sorrowful, like this Young Man, for having forsook our Father's House, and let us esteem our selves Happy for having again been received into it. Thus will our Repentance always be enlivened with a Regret mixed with Love, and accompany'd with Peace and Joy.

6. The Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, is a lively

ly representation of the Miserable End of a Rich Man. He was Cloathed in Purple, and fared deliciously every Day, while poor *Lazarus*, full of Sores, lay at his Gate in so indigent a Condition, that he only begg'd for the Crumbs that fell from the Rich Man's Table, and yet could not obtain so small a Comfort. The Dogs who were more Charitable than their Master, came and officiously Licked his Sores, which *Lazarus* permitted to teach us not to disdain the Consolation that G O D sends us by the meanest of his Creatures. At length *Lazarus* is taken out of the World, whose Soul having been therein purify'd by Afflictions, was, after his Death, carry'd by Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*. The Rich Man also dy'd, but his Condition, after Death, was as different from that of *Lazarus*, as it had been during his Life. For being condemned to eternal Torments, he lifts up his Eyes, and saw *Lazarus* in *Abraham's Bosom*, of whom, in the Anguish of his Soul, he begg'd a Drop of Water to cool his Tongue, but *Abraham* bid him remember, That he, in his Lifetime, received good Things, but *Lazarus* evil; but their Conditions were now absolutely altered: He then requests a Messenger might be sent to his Brethren to warn them to amend their Lives, that they might never come to that Place of Torment; but *Abraham* tells him, they had *Moses* and the Prophets, and if they did not hear them, neither would they regard one coming from the Dead. So that the poor faithful People of the World have no Cause to envy the Rich; but, on the contrary, ought to have a secret Compassion for them, and to be so far from murmuring, that they should bless G O D for their Poverty, as being an excellent Means to humble them before G O D for their Sins, which they have always before their Eyes, and which they feel as *Lazarus* felt his Sores.

7. By the Parable of the *Pharisees* and *Publican* who

who went into the Temple to Pray, our Saviour gives us an excellent Instance of what manner of Prayer he approves of, and of what he dislikes; *Two Men*, says he, *went into the Temple to pray, the one was a Pharisee*, who made Profession of a greater Vertue, and *the other a Publican*, or one of the loosest sort of People among the Jews, as well for their Rapines and Covetousness, as other Irregularities. The *Pharisee* standing upright, gave Thanks to GOD, that he was not like other Men, who live Disorderly, nor as that Scandalous *Publican* there present. He told God Almighty, that he Fasted twice a Week, and gave away the tenth part of his Goods. But the *Publican* stood at the lower end of the Temple, and dared not lift up his Eyes to Heaven; he smote his Breast, and opened his Mouth only to say these Words, *God be Merciful unto me, a Sinner*. This *Publican*, saith our Lord, *went down to his House justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*. Hereby we may observe how greatly different GOD's Thoughts are from ours, and his Judgments contrary to that of Men.

8. The Son of GOD intended ⁱⁿ to give his Disciples a Representation of what should happen in his Church in all Ages; spake to them in this Parable: That the Kingdom of Heaven was like a Man who went out early in the Morning to hire Labourers into his Vineyard, and agreed with them for a Penny a Day. He took in others at the Third, and some at the Eleventh Hour, and in the Evening he gave to each a Penny; they that had wrought all Day, murmured at the good Man of the House, that they had no more than those that work'd but one Hour, who answer'd he had done them no Wrong, *I gave thee what thou agreedst for, I can do what I will with my own; is thy Eye Evil because I am Good?* What Encouragement and Comfort is here to Repenting

penitent Sinners, that if they come in, even at last, and heartily bewail their ill-spent Time, and seriously strive to work out their Salvation, GOD will be Merciful and Gracious to them, and they shall be fully rewarded for all that they have done for his Glory and in his Service.

9. The Kingdom of Heaven, saith our Lord, is like a King, who made a Marriage for his Son, and sent his Servants to invite the Guests; but they made light of it, some going to their Farms, others to their Merchandize, and others more Ungrateful, outrageously handled the King's Servants, and slew them. *And when he had heard this, he was wroth, and sent forth his Armies and slew those Murderers.* He then sent his Servants into the High-way, who soon gathered a number of Persons, both Good and Bad, so that the Table was filled with Guests. The King coming in, saw one that had not a Wedding-Garment, who, having nothing to say for his Excuse, was sentenc'd to be bound Hand and Foot, and cast into outer Darkness. *For, saith Christ, many are called but few are chosen.* Our Saviour by this Parable, sets forth the Reprobation and Casting off of the *Jews*, of whom he says, that GOD sent unto them Prophets, and Wise-Men, and Scribes, some of whom they Persecuted, and Kill'd, and Crucified others: For which, and their other horrid Enormities, he pronounces so many Woes against them, with so much Zeal and Earnestness. It also shews the Election of us *Gentiles*, and that GOD expects we should use our utmost endeavour to make our selves worthy of his Grace, and to come with such Ornaments ~~as~~ have some proportion to the Majesty of him that call'd us.

10. Before our Blessed Lord had ended his Preaching, he was willing to lay before Men the severity of GOD's Judgments, and therefore proposes to them the Parable of the Foolish and Wise Virgins, to shew us, that how good soever our Condition may be, and

and tho' our Works be never so Exemplary, denoted by these burning and shining Lamps, yet shall we be rejected of GOD if we have not, as *St. Austin* says, this Oil of a true and perfect Humility; which shews us, that we are nothing in the sight of GOD, and that it is his Grace that works all in us. Yet the Parable of a Man travelling into a far Country, who gave to his *Servants*, to one five, and another two, and to another one Talent, and those who having improv'd the same, at his Return were commended and rewarded, plainly signifies, that every Man should improve the Talent which GOD bestows upon him. And therefore he that hath one Talent and made no use of it, is justly call'd a *wicked and slothful Servant*, whose Talent was also taken from him and given to another. Since it is most certain, that tho' GOD is no hard Master, yet it is not to be imagin'd, that He hath given us our Lives, to no other purpose than to take in, and let out the Air.

All the time, from the Entrance of *Jesus Christ* into *Jerusalem*, till his Passion, was spent in speaking to the *Jews* in such Parables as these, and other Discourses; wherein he reproached them for their Infidelity, foretelling them, that Pagans and Idolaters should take their place in the Kinddom of GOD; and having, in these two last Parables, acquainted them with the severity of GOD's Justice, he afterwards exhorted them to watch over themselves, by representing to them the last and general Judgment, saying, *When the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him, then shall he sit on the Throne of his Glory, and before him shall be gathered all Nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, and he shall set the Sheep on the Right-hand, but the Goats on the Left.* This Instruction is very necessary to awaken us out of that drowzy Coldness, whereunto we are all subject in this Life. For tho' our Sa-

vour

viour *Christ* has receiv'd from his Father a Sovereign Authority over all the World; yet he seems to suffer Mens Enormities, as if he were not concern'd thereat; tho' it is certain that he exercises an Invincible Power over them, which at this Great Day he will demonstrate with much Solemnity; and therefore he here inculcates, that it is a Man's greatest Wisdom in this Life, ever to remember the Judgment to come, and to prepare for it, that so they may meet with that comfortable Invitation, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World*, who have fed me, given me Drink, Entertain'd me, Cloathed me, Comforted me, and Visited me, when I was Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger, Naked, Sick, and in Prison, which tho' they have forgot, *Christ* remembers, and will then fully Reward. And on the contrary, that Men may never be surpriz'd with the Reproaches of our Lord to the Wicked, that they did neither of these, since when they refus'd all Charity to his Children, they did it to himself; and therefore, with the severest Anger, he pronounces that dreadful Sentence against them, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, unto Everlasting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels*. By which our Saviour declares, that it is not sufficient for us to avoid Evil, but that we must likewise do Good; seeing he does not reprove them for any Crimes committed, but only for their Omission of Charity; that being most acceptable to GOD, and the Way to obtain Everlasting Happiness.

Our Blessed Saviour having finish'd his Parables and Discourses to the People, and there remaining only two Days to the Passover, he commanded his Disciples to make Preparation for it; which being done, he declared the great desire he had to Celebrate it with them: Having Eaten the Lamb with them, as the Law prescrib'd: Before he Instituted his Divine Supper, he so far abas'd himself, that he wash'd
his

his Disciples Feet, and left it for an Example, which every Man who will be his Disciple must follow. He then set down with them, and knowing what Judas had done, as they did eat, he said, *Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.* At which Words they were exceeding sorrowful, and every one began to say unto him, *Lord is it I?* Our Saviour said, *He that dipperth his Hand with me in the Dish shall betray me, but woe unto that Man, it had been better he had not been born.* Then Judas said, *Master, is it I?* Jesus answered, *Thou hast said.* And as they were Eating, Jesus took Bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to his Disciples, saying, *Take Eat, this is my Body;* and he took the Cup and gave Thanks, and gave to them, saying, *Drink ye all of it;* for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the Remission of Sins, *I will not henceforth drink of the Fruit of this Vine, until that Day that I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom.* Our Lord distributed it to them with his own Hands, and he refused not Judas this Favour, with the same Patience wherewith he a while after suffer'd his perfidious Salutation. This was an early Instance that this Sacrament, which the Son of GOD then instituted for the Comfort and Salvation of the Faithful, would only prove Condemnation to those who should receive it unworthily.

After Judas had left our dear Redeemer, to execute the Design he had formed with the Jews, our Lord made an admirable Discourse to his Disciples, exhorting them to Love one another as he had lov'd them, by which all Men should know they were his Disciples; telling them, he was now going away. Simon Peter said, *Lord, whither goest thou?* He answered, *Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but shalt follow afterwards.* Peter, depending on his own strength, said, he would lay down his Life for his sake; but Christ, to check his Confidence, told him, *Satan* had desired to winnow him, but he had

Prayed for him, and that before the Cock Crew, he should deny him thrice. Having ended his last excellent Sermon, he went to Mount *Olivet* with *Peter*, *James* and *John*, who usually attended him, and coming to a place called *Gethsemane*, he went alone into the Garden adjacent to pray there, according to his usual Custom, and on this Occasion was well known to *Judas*; and falling on his Face to the Ground, prayed, saying, *My Father if it be possible let this Cup pass from me, yet not as I will, but as thou wilt*; which he repeated three times. Our Lord's Agony was so great in the Garden, altho' an Angel appeared to strengthen him, that he Sweat Drops of Blood; and his Passion has been the Admiration of all Christians in all Ages, especially when they saw so many People suffer Death joyfully for his Sake, and the Gospel. But we must consider the Case was different; for *Christ* bore the Punishment and Iniquity of all the World; and as he was Man, was liable to all the Infirmities of that State, being subject to Grief and Sorrow, to Hopes, and Fears, as we are; *For it behoved him to be in all Things like unto us, Sin only excepted*. Having shewed throughout his whole Life a perfect Resignation to his Father's Will, he seems to renew this Disposition at his Death; and teaches us, by his Example, to labour after this Temper of Soul in all Afflictions and Sufferings, but more especially at the Hour of Death, when he shall have most Occasion to put the same in practice, and to say, *Not my Will, but thy Will be done*.

Our Blessed Lord being exceedingly affected with Grief, came to his Disciples, but found them fallen Asleep, and in no sort disposed to afford him any Consolation. He came thrice to Awake them with these important Words, *What, could ye not Watch with me one Hour? Watch and Pray lest ye enter into Temptation. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak*. He had no sooner done speaking to them,

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the third Time, but *Judas* appear'd at the Head of a great Number of People, and boldly approaching our Saviour, treacherously kiss'd him, saying, *Hail, Master*, to whom our Lord only said, *Whereof comest thou hither? Dost thou betray the Son of Man with a Kiss?* After which, he, who heretofore fled when the People would have made him a King, went to meet those who came to take him, asking them, whom they sought? with so powerful a Voice as made them all fall on the Ground, shewing thereby, that it was not want of Power which made him suffer Death, but that he underwent it of his own Free-will. He then surrender'd himself to these wicked People, having an Eye to the Power which God had given them. *St. Peter* drew his Sword in his Defence, and cut off the Ear of *Malchus* the Servant of the High-Priest; but our Saviour was so far from Resistance and Revenge, that he instantly healed his Wound, and reprehended the Apostle, bidding him put up his Sword, since he wanted not his Arm to deliver him; for if he had not determin'd to drink of this Cup, he could have had the Assistance of Twelve Legions of Angels, but the Scriptures had declared that so it must be.

Our Lord being secured in the Hands of the *Jews*, his Disciples fled, and left him alone with them, who carry'd him before *Annas*, the Father-in-Law of *Caiphas*, who was the High-Priest that Year. *Annas* questioning him about his Disciples and Doctrine; whereto our Saviour reply'd, That he had not Taught in secret; so that he might be informed by every Body in that Matter; upon which an Officer struck *Jesus* on the Face, asking him, whether it became him to answer the High-Priest in that manner? *Christ* suffered this Indignity, with a Divine Patience, only demanded, What he had done amiss? otherwise, he that Smote him would shew himself to blame. *Annas* after this, sent him to *Caiphas*, where the Chief-Priests

Priests were assembled to form his Accusation, and to suborn false Witnesses upon Occasion ; but at length it all dwindled into this, That he said, *He would destroy the Temple, and build it up again in three Days.* The High-Priest ask'd him, Why he made no Defence ? But *Jesus Christ* still continuing silent, he commanded him in the Name of the Most High God, to tell him, if he were the *Christ* : *Tho' I should tell you,* said *Christ*, *that I am He, you would not believe me, nor let me go ; but you shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds, and sitting on the Right-hand of God.* The High-Priest having heard these Words, rent his Cloaths, and cry'd out, he had spoken Blasphemy, and that there was no need of further Witnesses, and all of them declar'd that he deserv'd Death. Then the Soldiers abused him, Spitting in his Face, Striking and Buffetting him, saying, *Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee.*

The Night being thus spent, in the Morning they led him to *Pilate*, where *St. Peter*, who had followed at a distance, deny'd him Thrice, not without horrid Oaths and Imprecations, saying, *He knew not the Man ;* and immediately the Cock Crew ? All happen'd as our Saviour had foretold. *Pilate* ask'd the *Jews*, What he was accus'd of ? Who answer'd confusedly, *That if he had not been a wicked Man, they would not have brought him before him.* *Pilate*, not being accus'd to Condemn Men upon such slight Grounds, would have remitted him again into their Hands. Whereupon they produced false Witnesses, who, making no mention of Religion, or the Temple, as they did before to the High-Priest, affirm'd, That he was a Seditious Fellow, stirring up the People to Rebellion, and hinder'd them from paying Tribute to *Cæsar*, Calling himself a King. *Pilate* then calling *Jesus*, said unto him, *Art thou King of the Jews ?* *Jesus* reply'd, his Kingdom was not of this World, his only Business among Men being to Instruct them in the
Way

Way to Everlasting Life. *Pilate* perceiving our Saviour's Innocency, went and told the *Jews*, That he found no Fault in him. The Chief Priests, being the more enrag'd, charg'd him with stirring up the People from *Galilee* to that Place; whereby *Pilate* finding he was a *Galilean*, sent him to *Herod*, having first asked him, Why he did not answer his Accusers? Who making no Reply, he astonish'd the Judge with his Silence.

Herod was overjoy'd at the Sight of him, of whom he had heard so many wonderful Things, and hoped to see some Miracles wrought by him: But *Christ* not answering him to the many Questions he propounded, both he and his Soldiers despised and abused him, putting a gorgeous Robe on him, and sending him back to *Pilate*; who calling together the Chief Priests, and the Rulers, and the People, told them again, that neither himself nor *Herod* could find any thing against him worthy of Death. And would have releas'd him upon the Account of the Feast of the Passover, (when he was obliged to release one Prisoner, whoever they pleased) being unwilling to condemn him, and concerned also at the Message sent by his Wife, who charged him not to have any thing to do in the Death of that Just Man, for whom she had suffered many Things in a dream. But the wicked Priests, and Rulers, who resolved to have our Saviour's Blood, so influenced the Multitude, that they cry'd out all at once, *Away with this Man, release unto us Barabbas, who for Robbery and Murder was condemned to Die.* *Pilate* then asked them, What they should do with *Jesus*? They all in a Rage cry'd out, *Crucify him, Crucify him.* *Pilate* thinking to assuage their Fury, and to gratify their malicious Spirits, condemned our Saviour to be scourg'd, imagining, that this Punishment might be a means to make him escape Death.

Then

Then *Judas*, when he saw how far the Enemies of our Saviour began to carry their Revenge, came to himself, and considering the Crime he had committed, was seiz'd with Despair, which made him bring back to the *Jews* the Thirty pieces of Silver which he had received of them, telling them, he had sinned in betraying innocent Blood, and having thrown his Money into the Temple, went away and hanged himself.

After this the Soldiers of the Governour stripped *Jesus*, putting on him a Purple Robe and a Crown of Thorns, and then in scorn bowed the Knee to him, saying, *Hail King of the Jews*, and spit upon him, and smote him on the Head with a Reed; and in this Posture *Pilate* presented him to the People, saying, *Behold the Man*; but the Chief Priests and Officers cry'd out again, *Crucifie him, &c.* *Pilate* said, *Take ye him, and Crucify him, for I find no Fault in him.* The *Jews* answered, *That by their Law he ought to Die*; and cunningly insinuated unto *Pilate*, that he shewed but small Affection to the *Roman* Emperor, in taking a Man's Part, who had declared himself a King in Opposition to *Cesar*. The Governour, who was more careful of his Fortune than to do Justice, could not withstand these Words; and observing that the more he strove to save him, the more Tumultuous his Enemies were, he caused Water to be brought, and thought to cleanse himself from the horrible Crime he was about to commit, by washing his Hands before all the People, and saying, he was *Innocent of the Blood of that Just Person, let them look to it*: To which all the People answer'd, *His Blood upon us and upon our Children.* And soon after he pronounced the Sentence of Death against our Saviour, delivering him into the Hands of the *Jews*, and set *Barabbas* at Liberty.

The *Jews* having at length got him in their Power, they immediately put the Sentence in Execution

cution, their Fury being impatient of Delays ; and loading him with his Cross, made him depart out of *Jerusalem* to go to *Mount Calvary*, which was the usual Place where Malefactors suffered. But finding our Saviour's Spirit faint under so great a Burden, they compell'd one *Simon* to carry it after him, attended by the insulting Shouts of the People that follow'd him: The holy Women that had follow'd *Jesus* in his Life-time, attended him to his Death, discovering by their Sighs and Tears, what a Share they had in his Sufferings : And therefore the Son of God speaks only to them, saying, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for your selves ; for the Time will come, in which it shall be said, Blessed are the Barren, and the Breasts which have not given Suck ; then shall they say to the Mountains, Fall on us, and Cover us, &c.*

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The Crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour
JESUS CHRIST.



OUR Blessed Lord being come to Mount *Calvary*,
(where this great Sacrifice was to be offered,
whose Efficacious Vertue was to communicate it self
to all Ages) he was first offered *Vinegar* mingled with
Gall, which he Tasted, but would not Drink. At
length they strip'd him of his Raiment, (upon which
they cast Lots, as it was Prophecy'd by *Isaiah* many
Hundred Years before) and nailed him to the Cross
between Two Thieves, who were led to Execution
along with him, that he might the better pass for an
Evil-doer. Our Lord (like a *Sheep* that before the
Shearers is dumb) open'd not his Mouth, unless it
were to pray for his Persecutors, saying, *Father for-
give them, they know not what they do.* But whilst he
was thus tenderly affected towards his Enemies, they
torbore not insulting over him, shaking their Heads,
and saying, *Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest
it in three Days, if thou be the Son of God, come
down*

The History of the

down from the Cross. The Chief Priests and Rulers likewise Mocked and Reproached him for his Weakness in pretending to save others when he could not save himself. Yea, one of the Malefactors that died with him, blasphemingly said, *If thou be Christ, save thy self, and us that suffer with thee*: But the other having his Soul suddenly enlightened, became a Convert; which Example has given much Consolation to many good Christians, and has been an Occasion of Ruin to numbers of Others. This Thief justified our Saviour's Cause against his Companion, saying, *As for our Parts we suffer justly, whereas our Blessed Lord has done nothing amiss*; and addressing himself to Christ, whom he knew to be King in another manner than Pilate did, who writ over his Head, in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS**) he entreated him to remember him when he came into his Kingdom; which Request our Saviour graciously granted, and promised he should be that Day with him in Paradise.

Our Holy Redeemer seeing the Blessed Virgin standing at the Foot of the Cross with St. John, the beloved Disciple, he said to his Mother, *Woman, behold thy Son*; and to St. John he said, *Behold thy Mother*; about the Sixth Hour there was Darkness over all the Land till the Ninth Hour, at which time Jesus cry'd with a loud Voice saying, **ELOI, ELOI, LAMASABACHTHANI**; That is to say, **MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?** Some of the Spectators said, *He calls for Elias; let us see if he will come and save him?* Jesus knowing that he had performed all Things, even to the least Circumstance of whatever has been foretold by the Holy Prophets concerning him, for a conclusion of all, he said, *I Thirst*, and having tasted a little Vinegar, and cry'd with a loud Voice, saying, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*, he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost.

Jesus

Jesus Christ having accomplished his Sacrifice on the Cross, and continu'd Obedient to the Death, there happen'd several Things which plainly discovered who he was, and signify'd to the *Jews*, what an horrible Crime they had committed. The Heavens were over-spread with thick Clouds of Darkness for three Hours; the Veil of the Temple was rent from top to bottom; the Graves were open'd, the dead Bodies of divers Saints which slept arose, and leaving their Burying-places, appear'd to several in *Jerusalem*. So many extraordinary Prodigies made the Centurion, who commanded the Soldiers, and they that were with him to watch our Saviour, greatly afraid, and they cry'd out, saying, *Certainly this was a Righteous Man, this was the Son of God.*

O Blessed Jesus, King of Heaven and Earth,
How meanly wast thou Treated at thy Birth?
A Manger was thy Cradle, and a Stable
Thy Privy-Chamber, *Mary's* Knees thy Table.
Thieves were thy Courtiers, and the Cross thy Throne,
Thy Diet Gall, a Wreath of Thorns thy Crown.
The King of Glory suffer'd this and more,
To make us Kings, who were but Slaves before.

Upon our Saviour's Passion.

The Earth quak'd; shut was the Sun's glorious Eye,
As loath to see the Lord of Glory Die.
The Skies were black, and the Harmonious Spheres
Their Order lose; the Clouds distilled Tears.
The Dead did now arise to give him room,
Each Grave did gape as if to be his Tomb.
The Heavens astonish'd sent down dreadful Thunder,
The World's Foundation shook to lose their Founder.
The Temple rent her sacred Veil in two,
To teach our harden'd Hearts what they shou'd do.

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Shall

Shall senseless things do thus, and shall not I,
 Lord, drop one Tear to see my Saviour die?
 Oh! Let my Tears continually fall down,
 And pierce this Heart that's harder than a Stone.

Another.

Thus died the Prince of Life, thus He,
 Who could not die, even died for me.
 My thoughtful Heart, Lord, shall arise,
 And ponder these deep Mysteries.
 What means his Death, who knew no Sin,
 Or what my Life, who live therein?
 Mine was the Debt, and Death my Due,
 Tho' thou wast pleas'd thy Son to sue;
 Thou, Lord, on him, was pleas'd to lay
 The Debt, and he the Price did pay.
 Thy Gospel Feasts, tho' sweet to me,
 Are the Emblems of his Agony.
 And oh! how great his Sufferings were,
 Who the Wrath of God and Man did bear?
 The Father then forsakes his Son,
 And Creatures 'gainst their Maker run.
 The joyless Stars ev'n seem'd to say,
Israel hath quench'd the Lamp of Day.
 The stubborn Mountains they lament,
 The Rocks they are in sunder rent.
 The Graves their sealed Doors uncloze,
 The Dead awaken'd also rose.
 Th' amaz'd Centurion mourning cries,
 Oh! 'tis the Son of God that dies.
 Thus all these labour to confess
 Thy Deity, thy Righteousness.
 Enough, dear Lord, these offer me
 Supports for the utmost Faith in thee.

Now as the Death and Passion of our Saviour was particularly foretold to the *Jews* by the Prophets of that Nation, so the *Gentiles* likewise had some notice thereof.

For

For *Lactantius* writes, that one of the *Sibils* aforementioned, gave an exact Account thereof some hundred Years before in these Words : *He shall appear Miserable, Igominious and Deformed, to the end he may bring Comfort to the miserable ; afterwards he shall fall into the Hands of wicked and faithless Men ; they shall buffet him with their sacrilegious Hands, and shall spit upon him with their unclean Mouths. He shall yield his innocent Body to be whipt, and he shall be silent while he suffers their Stripes, that thereby he may speak Peace to those that are dead. He shall wear a Crown of Thorns, and they shall give him Gall and Vinegar to drink ; This shall be the Kindness and Hospitality which he shall find among Men. The Veil of the Jews Temple shall be rent in two, and at Mid-day there shall be Dark-ness over all the World.*

Eusebius writes, that one *Phlegon* a Heathen gives an exact Account of this Darkness and extraordinary Eclipse, punctually agreeing with the time of the Day in which Christ suffered, in the eighteenth Year of the Reign of *Tiberius Caesar*. *Esculus* an Old Astronomer confirms the same, and demonstrates that by the Position of the Sun and Moon at that time, it was impossible there could be any Natural Eclipse. *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, who was a very skilful Astronomer, likewise testifies that he himself being Twenty-five Years old at our Saviour's Death, made Observation of this extraordinary Darkness, which he was assured could be no Eclipse of the Sun, because the Moon was at Full, and therefore cry'd out with a loud Voice, *Either the World is at an End, or else the God of Nature suffers : And the Wise Men at Athens* being astonished at this Prodigy, they thereupon erected an Altar to the unknown God, which *St. Paul* reprov'd them for, declaring that *Jesus Christ*, whom the wicked *Jews* have crucified, was this unknown God ; where-
by he converted many to the Christian Faith ;

which demonstrates that this Darkness over-spread the whole Hemisphere, since it was seen at *Athenz*, and other places remote from *Jerusalem* at the same time: Yea, the Moon being at full, as I have said, and having no Light but what she receives from the Sun, and being then in the Firmament under us, became likewise totally Eclipsed, so that the Darkness was Universal over the whole Earth, because the Moon and Stars give no Light but what proceeds from the Sun. *Lucianus*, a learned Priest of *Antioch*, was accustomed to use that as an Argument in Defence of the Christian Religion, against the Heathens, that their own Histories and ancient Records confirmed the Truth of the Miracles which happened at the Death of Jesus Christ.

The ancient Jewish Rabbies declare in their *Talmud*, which was composed many Years before our Saviour's Passion, That their Messiah at his Coming should be put to Death: And Rabbi *Jonathan*, who dy'd a little before Jesus was born, applies the whole Prophecy in the 53d of *Isaiah* to the Murther of the Messiah by the *Jews*, and Rabbi *Simeon*, who lived in the next Age after him, writes thus; *Woe to the Men of Israel because they will slay the Messiah: God shall send his Son in Man's Flesh, to cleanse them, and they shall destroy him.* And Rabbi *Hadasson*, with others in their Comments upon *Dan. 9.* says thus; *Three Years and a half shall God be present in the Flesh, who shall cry and preach upon Mount Olivet, and afterwards shall be slain.* Which differs very little from the Account given by the Holy Evangelists. So that it is manifest the particular Circumstances of Christ's Death were plainly foretold both to Jew and Gentile, and asserted likewise by the Jewish Doctors before it came to pass.

Now the Jews, whose Tempers it was to be scrupulous in Things of no weight, yet forward to commit the most palpable Injustices, thinking it a

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great Crime to suffer these three Crucify'd Bodies to remain on the Cross during the time of the Pass-over, which was a high Day with them, they intreated *Pilate* that their Legs might be broken, and that they should be taken down from the Cross, which being granted, they brake those of the other two, but not the Legs of *Jesus*, because he was dead already; *That the Scripture might be fulfilled, A Bone of him shall not be broken. But one of the Soldiers with a Spear pierced his Side, and forthwith there came out Blood and Water; and according to another Scripture, they shall look upon him whom they have pierc'd.*

At Night *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, a Rich Man, and a secret Disciple of *Jesus Christ*, who was not any ways consenting to his Death, came boldly to *Pilate* to beg our Saviour's Body, which he readily assented to; whereupon *Joseph*, together with *Nicodemus*, took the Body of our Lord, and embalming it with precious Spices, and shrouding it in a fine Linnen-cloth, they bury'd it in a new Tomb hewn out of a Rock, and roll'd a great Stone to the Door of the Sepulchre. And there was *Mary Magdalen*, and *Mary the Mother of James and Joses*, with other Women who followed him from *Galilee*, sitting over against the Sepulchre.

Altho' our blessed Lord lay bury'd in the Sepulchre, yet this did not satisfie the Jews; for they were afraid, lest it should be publish'd that he was risen. They therefore went and told *Pilate*, that this Deceiver, while he was living, had said, *After three Days I will rise again.* And therefore they desired him to set a Watch upon the Sepulchre, lest his Disciples should come and steal him away, and afterwards give out a Report among the People, That he was Risen, which was done accordingly. But hereby they blinded themselves with their own Wisdom; for by designing to prevent our Saviour's Resurrection, they confirm'd the Belief thereof by

many notable and undeniable Proofs. For the Sepulchre being thus guarded, and the Stone which secured it seal'd, there immediately arose a great Earthquake, and the Angel of the Lord descending from Heaven rolled away the Stone, and sat thereon; his Eyes shining like Lightning, and his Garments were white as Snow. The Guards that lay near the Sepulchre were hereby struck with Terror, and became as dead Men, therefore they hastned to Jerusalem, and told the Priests what had happen'd. Whereupon they immediately assembled to consult what to do, and at length could not find out a better Remedy against a thing so evident, than to corrupt those Soldiers with a Sum of Money, which they gave them, who were to declare to all People, That whilst they slept, his Disciples came and stole away the Body, telling them, that if the Governor should chance to hear of the Fraud, they would secure them from Danger. This they did accordingly; and the Jews to this Day affirm the same Falsity.

The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord and Saviour J E S U S C H R I S T.



THE Resurrection of our Blessed Saviour, being a Matter of the highest Importance, for confirming the Truth of his Doctrine, was exactly foretold both to Jew and Gentile. And the many Prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the Greatness, Glory and Triumph of his Church could never have been fulfill'd, if he had not risen again from the Dead : This was prefigur'd by *Jonas* being in the Belly of the Fish three Days and three Nights ; and in *Psal. 16.* *He will not suffer his Holy One to see Corruption.* And in *Hosea 6.* *After two Days will he revive us, and the third Day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.* And the *Sibils* about the same time discovered the same to the Gentiles : One of which writ thus ; *He shall undergo the Pains of Death, and shall sleep in the Grave for three Days, and then returning to Life again, He shall be the First-fruits of the Resurrection to his Chosen, and by conquering Death shall bring them to Life.* As this was foretold by the Prophets before Christ's

Appearance in the Flesh, so Jesus to comfort his Disciples and Followers, promises the same in several Discourses he had with them, tho' many times they did not understand his meaning: Particularly in *Mat. 12. For as Jonas was three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly, so shall the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.* Which Promise of his Return, if it had been made for a long time to come (as *Mahomet* promised the *Saracens* to re-visit them again after Eight Hundred Years) tho' the performance was never intended, yet might the Falshood be conceal'd by the length of time. But Jesus so often affirming that he would rise again in three Days, it cannot be imagin'd but that he really design'd to perform the same; otherwise he would have been judged a Deceiver.

Now *Mary Magdalen*, and *Mary* the Mother of *James* and *Salome*, and certain others, whose Love was the same to Jesus both living and dead, being come early to the Sepulchre to perfume our Saviour's Body with Spices, argued among themselves who should roll away the Stone that shut up the Passage into the Sepulchre; but was greatly surprized when drawing near they saw it open, and yet more, when they entred in, not finding him whom they sought for. *Mary Magdalen* ran immediately to give notice of this to the Apostles, and *St. Peter* being come to the Sepulchre with *St. John*, *for the Linnen Cloths, where the Body of Jesus was wrapped, and they were perplexed; for as yet they knew not that the Scripture says, He must rise again from the Dead.* So going away in an Astonishment, *Mary Magdalen* tarry'd behind, shedding Tears in the Sepulchre, when two Angels cloath'd in white Raiment, one of which stood at the Head, and the other at the Foot of the place where the Body of Jesus Christ lay, ask'd *Mary* why she wept? She answer'd, *They have taken the Lord out of the Sepulchre,*

chre, and we know not where they have laid him. And they said, *Why seek ye the Living among the Dead ? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spake unto you, while he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the Hands of sinful Men, and be Crucified, and the Third Day rise again.* Mary Magdalen turning about, she saw Jesus in the shape of a Gardner, who asked her, *Why she wept ?* To whom she said, *Sir, if thou hast born him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away :* Jesus said unto her *Mary ;* upon which she knew him ; and being transported with Joy, ran to embrace his Feet ; but he said, *Touch me not ; for I am not yet ascended to my Father ;* charging her to go and tell the Disciples what she had seen.

This is the first appearance of Jesus after his Resurrection ; his Disciples recount Eleven more which he did in the Flesh before his Ascension. The second was to *Joanna Mary*, the Mother of *James*, and the other Women, as they returned homeward, who were permitted to kiss his Feet, *St. Mat. 28.* The third to *Simon Peter* alone. 4. To the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*. 5. To all the Apostles, and other Disciples together, when the Doors were shut. 6. To the same Company again after eight Days, at which time he did eat and drink, and suffered 'em to touch his Body. 7. To *St. Peter* and *St. John*, with five other Disciples, when they were Fishing, with whom he vouchsafed likewise to eat. 8. To Eleven of his Disciples at once upon Mount *Tabor* in *Galilee*. 9. To above Five Hundred Brethren at once, *1 Cor. 15.* 10. To *St. James*, as the Apostle testifieth. 11. To all his Apostles, Disciples and Followers together upon Mount *Olivet*, when in their Presence he ascended into Heaven. 12. Lastly, After his Ascension to *St. Paul*, *1 Cor. 15. 8.* And last of all, he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time.

All these Appearances are recorded in Scripture,

wherein Christ shewed himself after his Resurrection, to such as by his Eternal Wisdom and Counsel were pre-ordained to be Witnesses of so glorious a Sight: St. Luke affirms, Acts i. *He shewed himself after his Passion, by many infallible Proofs, being seen of them Forty Days, and speaking of the things appertaining to the Kingdom of God.* And the Scribes and Pharisees, who were astonished with the sudden News of his Rising again, found out the most ridiculous and improbable Expedient to discredit the same, by saying, *his Disciples stole him away while the Soldiers slept, &c.* For the Apostles were so dejected and dismayed at our Saviour's Death, the End whereof they did not yet fully comprehend, that it is probable they did not appear abroad so publickly as before, and therefore those innocent Women, whom their Sex secured from Violence, presumed only to visit the Sepulchre, which no Man durst do for fear of the Soldiers, 'till the Women told them they were terrified, and put to flight by the Resurrection of Christ. How then can it be imagined, that his Disciples, who were so disturbed and amazed, should venture to steal away a dead Body from a Guard of Soldiers; or if they had so much Courage, what probability was there of Success, the Body being laid in a new Tomb shut up with a great Stone, and sealed by the Magistrate? How was it possible, I say, that they should come thither, break up the Monument, take out the Body, and carry it away, never after to be found, without being seen or observed by some that attended? Or if all this were possible, yet what Profit, Pleasure or Comfort, could it be to them in this their dejected State, to have the Sight and Presence of a dead Carcase, so mangled, torn and abused, as that was both upon the Cross and before, which might rather have afflicted than yielded them any Consolation? Finally, How could the Soldiers tell what was

was acted and done while they were all asleep, as the Priests made them say they were?

Pilate considering all these Circumstances, and the improbability of the Story, that the Body should be stolen away without the knowledge of the Guards, and that the Disciples could have little Benefit by taking it away, he sent for the Soldiers, and examined them strictly about it, who at length discovered the whole Truth of the matter; Namely, that in their fight *Jesus* rose out of the Sepulchre; and at that very Moment there was so dreadful an Earthquake, and such trembling and opening of Sepulchres, with such Groans, Screeks and Commotions in all the Elements, that they ran away affrighted, and told the Chief Priests and Elders of the *Jews*, who being much disturbed at the News, gave them Money to say, That while they were sleeping, the Body was stolen away by his Disciples. *Pilate* gave an Account of this wonderful Transaction to *Tiberius* Emperor at *Rome*, with the particular Confessions of divers others, who had seen and spoken with those who rose from the Dead at that time, and had appeared to many of their Acquaintance at *Jerusalem*, assuring them that *Jesus* was also risen. *Tiberius* was much surprized at these things, and proposed to the Senate, that *Jesus* might be admitted among the rest of the *Roman* Gods, offering to confirm the same by an Imperial Decree; but they refusing it, the Emperor was so offended, that he declared, no Person whatsoever should be molested, upon pain of Death, for professing or owning the God-head, and Doctrines of Christ. Thus much testifieth *Tertullian* in his *Apology* for the Christian Religion against the Heathens; who, being a Learned Councillor, lived in *Rome* divers Years before he became a Christian, and about One Hundred and Eighty Years after Christ's Ascension, and so by his Office and Learning

ing had opportunity to inspect into the *Roman Records*; and *Egisippus*, another ancient Writer, who lived before *Tertullian*, and is of no less Authority, affirms the very same things. Yea, many Jews were forced to believe the Resurrection of Christ; tho' it had not so much Influence as to persuade 'em to become Christians. And *Josephus* aforementioned, who lived about Forty Years after Christ, says, That tho' Jesus was Crucified by some of the Chief of their Religion, yet three Days after his Death he appeared alive unto them, according as the Prophets inspired by God had foretold of him. Thus he writ when there were yet a great many Christians alive, who had seen and spoken with Jesus after the Resurrection; and a great number of Jews had heard the same affirmed by their Fathers, Brethren, Kinsfolks and Friends, who were themselves Eye-Witnesses thereof. So that there is sufficient Testimony, both divine and humane, of the Resurrection of our blessed Saviour.

Jesus having appeared several times for forty Days after he arose from the Dead; when the time of his Ascension was come, the Eleven Disciples went away into *Galilee* to *Mount Olivet*, where Christ had appointed them, who appearing to them, they worshipped him, but some doubted: He then declared to them, that he had received all Power both in Heaven and Earth, and sent them to Teach and Baptize all Nations, promising that he would be with them to the end of the World, and would give them Power to cast out Devils, to speak with New Tongues, to take up Serpents, not to be hurt by drinking Poyson, and to recover the Sick by laying their Hands on them. And commanded them not to depart from *Jerusalem*, 'till he had sent the Promise of the Father to them, and that they were endued with Power from on High, and that after the Holy Ghost was come upon them, they

they should receive Power to be Witnesses to him both in *Jerusalem*, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth. And it came to pass after the Lord had spoken to them, when he had Blessed them, he was parted from them, and while they beheld, a Cloud received him out of their sight, and he was carried up, and was received into Heaven. And while they worshipped, and looked steadfastly toward Heaven, as he went up behold two Men stood by them in white Apparel, which also said, Ye Men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven, this same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into Heaven. Now all these Things being done in the presence of at least a hundred and twenty Witnesses, as St. Luke affirms, *Acts* 1. Who likewise declares every particular Circumstance so exactly, as it had been the easiest matter in the World to have refuted this Narration, if it had not been true; neither would any one have received so much Damage by publishing such a Falshood, as himself, and the rest of the Disciples and Followers of Jesus did.

To conclude therefore this brief Account of the Birth, Life, Doctrine, Actions, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of our Holy Redeemer; It is hereby manifest, that whatsoever was foretold by the Holy Prophets, concerning the Messiah, was punctually fulfilled while Jesus was upon Earth, and we are hereby fully assured, that he was the true Messiah, and the Saviour of the World; which is yet more evident by what ensued after his Ascension and Departure out of the World; wherein his Power, Deity, Love, Care and Providence; His perfect accomplishment of all the Promises he made, and finally the fulfilling of all his Prophecies, and the Justification of all his Sermons and Doctrines upon Earth have been declared and fully manifested, which will appear to be true beyond all contradiction, if we consider the following Particulars. 1. The Protection

Protection that Christ afforded to his little Church and Kingdom which he left upon Earth, with the wonderful Increase and Continuation thereof against all the Powers of Earth and Hell. 2. The Acts of the Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and Witnesses throughout the World. 3. That the Kingdom of Darkneſs was subdued by his Death and Reſurrection. 4. The terrible Judgments that beſet the Enemies of Chriſt. Laſtly, The fulfilling all the Prophecies and Promiſes which he made to his Apoſtles, Diſciples and Followers, while he was upon Earth.

1. As to the firſt, St. Luke tells us, *Acts* 1. That thoſe who had been Spectators of our Saviour's Aſcenſion returned back to *Jeruſalem*, and continued there together in Prayer, Supplication and Expectation of what ſhould become of them; the whole City were ſet againſt them; they themſelves were poor innocent People, and divers of them Women. Lands and Revenues they had none to maintain them, nor Friends at Court to ſupport them againſt their Enemies, the Name of Jeſus was hateful, and whoever ſpoke well of him was counted an Enemy to the State. Some of them poſſibly were concerned how they ſhould ſuſtain themſelves, and how this feeble Congregation ſhould ſubſiſt. For abroad they durſt not go for fear of Perſecution, and they could not long continue together for want of Neceſſaries, and beſides they doubted every Hour to be ſeized and hal'd into Priſon. And tho' in thoſe Diſtreſſes they were ſomewhat comforted with the thoughts of their dear Lord, and the precious Promiſes he had made at his Departure, yet their preſent Condition ſeemed in Human Reaſon to be very deplorable.

But behold, when they had continued ten Days together, and no doubt had ſuffered many Inconveniencies, Jeſus perform'd his Promiſe, by ſending the Holy Ghoſt, the Comforter. By whoſe Coming, beſides the Spiritual Joy which poſſeſt their Souls.

Souls they received Fortitude and Courage to go forth into the World ; they had the Gift of Tongues, that so all People might understand the good Tidings of Salvation which they brought ; and were likewise endued with the Spirit of Wisdom and Illumination in the highest Myteries, whereby to convince and confound their most subtle Adversaries ; they had also the Gift of Prophecy, with the power of working such Signs and Miracles as made the World astonished. By these Divine Aids they preached with such Efficacy, that St. Peter converted Three Thousand Souls in one Day, by one Sermon ; and in a few Years after Christianity was so spread over all the World, that the Roman Emperors began to dread the Effect thereof, their Adversaries representing them as Traytors and Enemies to the Government ; whereupon *Tertullian* writ his Apology for the Christians aforementioned, wherein he thus argues with the Heathen Emperors ; ‘ If we were Enemies to the State you might then go and seek new Cities and Countries to govern, since you would have more Adversaries than Loyal Subjects in your Empire ; we have filled your Cities, your Towns, your Provinces, your Castles, your Fortresses, your Camps, your Tents, your Pallaces, your Senates, your Market-places and your Islands, only we have left your Idolatrous Temples to your selves, all other places being full of Christians. If we were Enemies, what dangerous Rebellions might we have made, tho’ our number be but small in comparison of the rest of your People ; since we so little value our Lives, that we suffer our selves to be slain daily by your Hands : This therefore is your Safety, that notwithstanding your unjust Persecution of us, we are Loyal, Patient and Obedient, and that the Christian Religion obliges us rather to be kill’d than kill.

Thus we see what mighty progress Christianity had

had made in less than two hundred Years, after the Death of our Saviour, and how the little Flock increased, notwithstanding all the resistance and violence that the Grandees of the World used to suppress it; This being written in the time of the fourth Persecution, wherein Christians were prosecuted as the worst of Malefactors, only for professing the Religion of their Holy Master; which yet triumphed over the Tortures, Whips and Swords of the Mighty Tyrants of the World, when there was no Temptation of Profit, Pleasure or Advantage; but on the contrary, Pain, Misery, and the most cruel Deaths attended the same.

When *Cyrus* the *Persian* Emperor undertook to conquer the World, he for encouraging Men to list themselves in his Service, caused Proclamation to be made, 'That whosoever would be his Soldiers, ' if he be a Footman, said he, I will make him an ' Horseman; if an Horseman, I will make him ' ride in a Chariot; if he be a Farmer, I will make ' him a Gentleman; if he possess a Cottage, I will ' bestow a Village on him; if he has a Village, I ' will give him a City; if he be a Lord of a City, ' I will make him Governour of a Province; and for ' Gold and Silver, I will pour it out upon him ' by Weight and Measure, and not by Tale. This was the pompous Edict of *Cyrus* to gain Followers for the prosecuting his Designs. Let us now observe the Differences between this vain-glorious Proclamation, and the Encouragement the Blessed Jesus gave to those that would embrace his Doctrines: The Sermons he Preached were, *Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand: In this World you shall have Trouble; you shall be as Sheep among Wolves; they shall deliver you up to the Councils, and scourge you in the Synagogues; ye shall be brought before Governours and Kings; and shall be hated of all Men for my Names-sake; if any Man will* be

be my Disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me. Whosoever shall save his Life for my sake shall lose it. And finally he says, if any Man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.

This was the Entertainment proposed by Jesus to such as would come and serve under his Banner, with express Protestation, that he came not to send Peace, but the Sword, to cause Variance, Strife and Enmity between the nearest Relations : And yet these discouraging Doctrines, so contrary to Man's natural and sensual Appetite, tho' publish'd by weak Instruments, yet gain'd more Hearts in forty Years, than ever any Monarch in the World did, by proposing the greatest Profits and Advantage to their Subjects. Which clearly evidenceth the Almighty Power of Christ, who contrary to human Reason could gain so miraculous a Conquest.

2. And this introduceth the second Particular ; namely, The wonderful Things wrought by the Apostles, who being mean, unlearned Fishermen, Tent-makers, &c. were chosen out, and assigned to perform this weighty Work of Converting all Nations and Countries, and to confound the Power, Wisdom and Learning of the Rabbies and Doctors of the World ; and to govern and direct all those who should submit to the Laws of their Great Master ; for which they seem'd no ways qualify'd, if we consider their weak Questions and Demands a while before his Passion, whereby they appear'd to have profited so little by the Conversation and Instruction of our Saviour for above three Years together, as to be very incapable of such high Offices, or to understand such great Mysteries. Yet these very Men, who of themselves were weak and impotent, received such Wisdom and Understanding after the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon them,

them, that the World stood amazed, that without Study they could put to Silence the greatest Philosophers then living, and work such strange Miracles in the open view of all Men, so that *St. Luke* says, *Acts 2. Fear came upon every Soul, at the many Signs and Wonders done by the Apostles.*

As for Instance ; The Healing of the Cripple by *St. Peter* by only bidding him, in the Name of *Jesus of Nazareth*, rise up and walk ! The sudden Death of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, by the Word only of that Apostle ; and his being delivered out of Prison by an Angel. The Variety of Languages which the Apostles spake ; the visible descending of the Holy Spirit ; the miraculous Conversion of *St. Paul* ; These and many more super-natural Works, perform'd before a great number of Witnesses, fill'd the People with Wonder and Amazement : And as we have hinted, if any part thereof had been false, the *Jews* would certainly have expos'd the same, thereby to discredit the Truth of the Christian Religion : But on the contrary, the most earnest Adversaries thereunto confessed the Facts, but calumniated them as if they were done by Magick Art, and the Power of the Devil. As *Julian* and *Nero* alledg'd, who emulating the Miracles of the Apostles, study'd that vain Science on purpose to have imitated them therein ; but as *Pliny* says, no Men were ever more baffled and deceived thereby, neither of them being able to foresee their own miserable Ends. Thus the Apostles proceeded to preach the Gospel of Christ through all the World, no Danger nor Persecution, no, not Death it self, having power to shake their Constancy ; they joyfully laying down their Lives, Confirming their Doctrine with Comfort, Courage, and in full Expectation of being Rewarded with Crowns and Kingdoms in another World ; all these Things manifest that what these Men did, could proceed only from the Divine Assistance of their Lord and Master.

Now

Now, as to the Evangelists, who have Recorded the Birth, Life, Doctrine, and Death of our Lord, we may observe, that Christ in delivering his Laws and Precepts to us, used a different Method from other Law-givers, who to procure them greater Reverence and Authority, writ them down with their own Hands; as *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, and others among the *Greeks*, *Numa Pompilius* to the *Romans*, and *Mabomet* to the *Saracens*. But Jesus to manifest his Divine Power, in directing the Stile and Pen of the Evangelists, left nothing written by himself, but passed out of the World in Innocency and Silence, without any Ostentation of his own Actions; that the Prophecy of *Ezekiel* might be fulfilled, that there should be four undeceivable Witnesses, which Day and Night should, without ceasing, Preach, Extol and Magnify their Lord and Master. The first and last, namely *St. Matthew* and *St. John*, were Apostles; *St. Mark* and *St. Luke* were two of Christ's Disciples, who Recorded what they had understood by Conference with the Apostles. The first Gospel was writ in *Hebrew*, because the Actions of Christ were performed among the *Jews*. The other three are said to be written in the *Greek* and *Roman* Tongues. And tho' they wrote their Histories in divers Countries, far distant from each other, yet they exactly agree in most Particulars. They published them when great Numbers were alive that had seen the Facts, and many more who endeavoured to contradict them. They set down the City, Town, Village, Place, Time, Hour, Men, Women, &c. And the more Circumstances there were, the easier had they been refuted. They did not write in *Judea* of things done in *India*, but in the same Country where they were publicly known; they published their Gospels in their own Life-times, and preached the same things. They never altered nor amended their Writings from what they first set

set down; And lastly, they laid down their Lives in the Defence and Justification of what they had written, which never happened to any Monarch in the World, for the Credit of his Laws or Edicts.

Their manner of Writing was sincere, without Art or Rhetorical Flourishes. They flatter none, no not Jesus himself whom they adored; and tho' they confess him to be their God and Creator, yet they do not conceal his Infirmities as he was a Man, as his Hunger and Thirst, his Weariness, his Weeping, his Passion of Fear, and the like. Neither do they omit the Defects which the World might suppose the Apostles, and their other Superiors were guilty of. As, how Christ rebuked them for their dulness of Understanding, after long Instruction; and of their asking him very impertinent Questions; they set down the Unbelief of *St. Thomas*, the Ambition of *St. John*, and *St. James* the Son of *Zebedee*, while they were yet living; with *St. Peter* denying his Master; yea, *St. Matthew* owns himself to be a Publican, which was a scandalous Office among the *Jews*. These Writings were received for undoubted Truths by all who lived in that Age; there were a great number of Copies transcribed, which were preserved with the utmost Care and Reverence as Holy and Divine Scriptures. They were Read, Taught and Expounded by the Fathers and Preachers in all Ages since; so that no doubt we have the very same Writings incorrupted, as they were left by their Authors, since it was impossible for any Adversary to Corrupt so many Copies as were extant throughout the World, and the Fraud not to be discovered. And we find that we have at this time the same very Text, Words and Sentences, that the Ancient Fathers alledge out of the Scriptures; so that there can be no more question of this matter, than whether *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Jerusalem*, or such other Renowned Cities, are the same that Authors have mentioned in former Ages. Now

Now for the confirmation of what the Holy Evangelist Recorded, the Divine Providence Ordained, that a most infinite Number of Witnesses or Martyrs should Sacrifice their Blood for Christ and his Doctrine, which never was done for any Profession or Religion in the World besides, considering all the Circumstances thereof. For tho' some few of the *Jews* and *Maccabees* were injuriously put to Death by Heathen Princes, yet it was generally more for the resisting their Authority than out of hatred to their Religion; and as to numbers, 'tis evident that more Christians suffered in Two Months for the sake of Christ, than were put to Death of the *Jews* in Two Thousand Years before his coming; which is very wonderful, considering that the Jewish Religion was no less opposite to Pagan Idolatry than Christianity. But herein Christ's Sayings were fulfill'd, *I came not to bring Peace, but the Sword*; and again, *I send you forth as Sheep among Wolves, &c.* To be Torn, Massacred and Destroyed: And indeed almost infinite Multitudes of all Conditions, Ages, and of both Sexes, suffered daily for the Testimony of Jesus; being put to Death with such intolerable Torments by the Bloody Tyrants of the Earth, as were never before heard of; all which they endured with such invincible Courage and Alacrity, that their very Enemies were convinc'd they were supported by some Divine Power.

And because some Heathens objected that wicked Men might suffer with Cheerfulness as well as Christians, *Tertullian* in his Apology, thus argues with them. *I do acknowledge that some Malefactors may meet Death undauntedly, yet they seldom defend their evil Actions, but rather excuse, deny and conceal them. They tremble when they are taken, and hardly acknowledge their Crimes upon the Rack, and when they are condemned, they lament and grieve, imputing their evil Fortune to Destiny or the Planets. On the contrary*

trary the Christian is neither afraid nor ashamed of the Cause for which he suffers, but glories therein. If he be accused he does not deny the Truth, but boldly confesseth the same; if he be condemned, he gives Thanks, and seems to repent, that he was not call'd to die for Christ sooner. What evil can you then charge upon Christianity, which freeth the Professors of it from Shame, Repentance and Sorrow; and fills them with Consolation and Joy in suffering for the same? So that nothing can more assure us of the Divine Power and Omnipotency of Jesus, than the invincible Fortitude which he imparted to his Witnesses and Martyrs above all Human Strength or Thoughts.

3. Our Blessed Lord likewise shewed his Omnipotency in silencing all the Heathen Oracles at his Birth, of which the Pagan Authors took great notice: *Eusebius* relates, That the Oracle of *Apollo* was often heard to complain of the Hebrew Child that was Born, and to say, *Woe unto me, Lament with me, for the Hour of giving Answers to those who address'd to my Altars is now taken from me.* And we read that many wicked Spirits begg'd of Christ, when on Earth, not to afflict or torment them. But after his Death, upon the Preaching of his Name and Gospel throughout the World, the Oracles which abounded in every Country and City were absolutely silenced, so that *St. John* saith, *Christ came into the World to destroy the Works of the Devil,* and left the same Authority to his Disciples and Followers. *Lactantius* reports, That in his Days a Christian Servant going with his Master into an Idol Temple, the Gods cried out, They could do nothing while that Christian was there. And *Eusebius* writes, that the Emperor *Dioclesian* going to inquire of the Oracle of *Apollo*, receiv'd Answer, *That the Just Men were the Cause he could say nothing;* which his own Priests interpreted to be meant Ironically of the Christians, who were reckoned so to be.

And

And *Plutarch*, who lived within One Hundred Years after Christ, searching diligently into the cause of ceasing of Oracles, concludes, That either there were so many Wise Men in the World, that their Answers might stand for Oracles, or that the Spirits wherewith they were possess'd, were by length of time grown Old or Dead. Finally, *Porphyrius*, an earnest Adversary to Christianity, speaks thus of *Æsculapius*, the God of Physick, at a time when *Mesina* in *Sicily* was visited with a dreadful Pestilence. *It is no wonder*, says he, *that this City has been so many Years vexed with the Plague, since both Æsculapius, and all the rest of the Gods are now departed from it by the coming of the Christians; for since Men have begun to worship Jesus, we never could obtain any Benefit from our Gods.* Thus much the Champion of *Paganism* has Recorded to the Honour of Jesus; and tho' he design'd thereby to raise Hatred and Persecution against them, yet his Confession is very remarkable, and confirms what *Plutarch* relates, That about the End of *Tiberius's* Reign, a strange Voice with horrible Screeches and Howlings were heard in the *Grecian Sea*, complaining, that their God *Pan* was dead, which he affirm'd was attested to *Tiberius*, and that his Diviners and Soothsayers being call'd, could yield no reason for the same. But the Christians by computing the time, found that this Accident happen'd exactly at the Death of Christ, whereby all the wicked Spirits and Idols upon Earth were overthrown and silenced.

4. And as the Divinity and Omnipotency of our Blessed Lord was manifested in subduing all internal Enemies; so his Justice upon those on Earth is very remarkable: For tho' the Eternal Punishment of the Wicked is reserv'd for the Life to come, yet for the manifestation of his God-head at his first Appearance in the World, it was necessary that some of them should be made eminent Examples of Divine Displeasure. Of this number was *Herod*, called

called the *Ascalonite*, who after his Persecution of Christ in his Infancy, and the Slaughter of the Infants of *Bethlehem* for his sake, wore out a miserable Life, in continual Fear of his own Wife and Sons, whom after he had cruelly murdered, he fell into Grief and Desparation, by reason of a loathsome and incurable Disease, of which he died, that he attempted to stab himself if he had not been prevented by the standers-by. *Archelaus* his eldest Son, who was a terror to Jesus in his Return from *Egypt*, being left King by his Father *Herod*, *Augustus* would not confirm the Succession, but of a King made him a Tetrarch, or Governor, of the fourth part only of his Dominions; and afterwards seizing on all his Estate, he was banished into *France*, where he died miserably. *Herod* called *Antipas*, Brother to *Archelaus*, and Tetrarch of *Galilee*, who put *St. John Baptist* to Death, and scoff'd at our Saviour when he was brought before him, and *Herodias*, his Concubine, before his Passion, was deposed by the Emperor *Caius*, upon the Accusation of *Agrippa* his nearest Kinsman, and contumeliously banish'd into *France*, and afterward into the Desert Places in *Spain*, where he and *Herodias* wandring about in great Misery, abandon'd of all Men, ended their wretched Lives; and 'tis Recorded, that her dancing Daughter *Herodias*, who requir'd *St. John Baptist's* Head, being forc'd to pass over a frozen River, the Ice broke, and her Head was cut off thereby, without hurting the Body, to the Admiration of all the Spectators. After this, *Herod Agrippa*, who accused *Herod* the Tetrarch, having slain *St. James*, and imprison'd *St. Peter*, was in a publick Assembly of the Princes and Nobles of *Casarea*, struck from Heaven with a most horrible Disease, whereby his whole Body putrify'd, and he was eaten with Worms, as we read in *Acts* 12. And *Josephus* affirms the same, and remarks with admiration, that at the time where-
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after Christ's Passion, the whole Family and Kindred of *Herod*, which he says, was very large, he having several Wives at once, with many Children, Brothers, Sisters, Nephews and Relations, yet they all died miserably within a short time, not one of them remaining to keep up the Name or Family, which says he, evidenceth to the World the Folly of Men in placing Confidence in any human Felicity.

Neither did the *Romans*, who had any Hand in persecuting Jesus, or his Followers, escape better : For *Pontius Pilate*, who pronounced Sentence against our Lord, falling into Disgrace in *Judea*, was sent home to *Italy*, and there being neglected and discountenanced by the Emperor his Master, he fell into Desperation, and killed himself with his own Hands. Yea, of the *Roman* Emperors themselves, from the Reign of *Tiberius* to *Constantine* the Great, who established the Christian Religion, being about Three Hundred Years, few or none escap'd Divine Justice ; for *Tiberius*, who gave the Christians Liberty, and forbid their being molested, died peaceably in his Bed ; but *Caligula*, who, in Contempt of all Divine Power would be worshipped as a God, was murdered by his own Kindred. And *Nero*, who first persecuted them, after he had put to Death *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* at *Rome*, and had murdered his own Mother, Brother, Wife, and *Seneca* his Master, was so abhorr'd of all, that the Senate condemned him to be put into the Pillory, and to be whip'd to Death ; to avoid which shameful end, he slew himself, complaining that he had neither Friend or Enemy to dispatch him. The like Tragical Deaths had the Emperors *Galba*, *Otho*, *Vitellius*, *Domitian*, *Commodus*, *Pertinax*, *Julian*, *Mercinus*, *Antonius*, *Alexander*, *Decius*, *Gallus*, *Voluptianus*, *Emilianus*, *Valerianus*, *Galiemus*, *Cajus*, *Cajanus*, *Maximianus*, *Lucinus*, and others ; whose miserable Deaths a Noble Christian Councillor above

One Thousand Years ago objected against *Zosimus* a Heathen Writer, to shew that all these fell by the Power of Jesus; and that since *Constantine's* Days, while the Roman Emperors have been Christians, no such Examples can be shew'd, except upon *Julian* the Apostate, and *Valens* an *Arian* Heretic, and some few others, for their notorious and detestable Enormities. But the most eminent Instance of Divine Justice was what befel the whole Nation of the Jews for their barbarous Cruelty to our Blessed Saviour at his Death and Passion. And according to the Account given by *Josephus* and *Philo*, both Jewish Historians, who lived about the same time, their intolerable Calamities and Miseries, soon after the Ascension of Jesus, can hardly be imagined: First, by *Pilate*, their Governour, and then by *Petronius* under *Caligula*, and several others afterward, which at length inforced them to rebel against the *Romans*, and occasion'd their utter Ruin and Extirpation by *Titus Vespasian*, with the Burning of their Temple, and Destruction of *Jerusalem*, 110000 of them being slain in the Siege, and 77000 taken Prisoners, who were either put to Death, carry'd in Triumph, or sold for Slaves in all Parts of the World. And it is remarkable, that this universal Destruction of the Jewish Nation, the like whereof never happen'd to any People before or after them, (the *Romans* never using any such Severity towards others that they conquer'd) came upon them at the very same time that they put our Saviour to Death; namely, at the Feast of the Passover, when the whole Nation out of all Countries and Tribes, were Assembled together, and that by the Hands of the *Roman Caesar*, for whom they had rejected Jesus, saying, *We have no King but Caesar*. And as they apprehended Christ upon Mount *Oliver*, *Titus* planted his first Battery for their Destruction upon that Mount.

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And as they led Jesus from *Caiaphas* to *Pilate*, so they were haled up and down from *John* to *Simon*, (two Tyrants that had usurp'd Dominion within the City) and were scourg'd and tormented before their Tribunal-seats. Again, as Jesus was scoff'd at, beaten, and villainously intreated by the Soldiers in *Pilate's* Palace, so were the Jewish Noblemen and Governors abus'd, beaten and crucify'd by the same Soldiers, which cruel Death of Crucifying was practiced upon them soon after Christ's Passion, but never before: And *Josephus* affirms, that five hundred of them suffered this Opprobrious Death in one Day, insomuch, that the place they died in would hardly contain so many Crosses, nor could they scarce find Crosses to execute them upon.

After these Calamities fell upon 'em about Forty Years after our Saviour's Ascension, all which time they continued Obstinate Opposers of his Doctrine, delivered to them by himself and his Disciples, of whom they had slain St. *James* and St. *John*, and banished St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, and others, *Lactantius* relates, that Christ appeared to the two latter, a little before their Martyrdom at *Rome*, and declared, That within three or four Years after their Death, he would take Revenge on the *Jews*, by the utter Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and that Generation; which he says, they revealed to the Christians in *Judea*; whereupon, saith *Eusebius*, they departed from *Jerusalem*, not long before the Siege began, to a Town called *Pella*, beyond *Jordan*, to which Jesus had directed them, it being under the Government of *Agrippa*, who being at Amity with the *Romans*, they remained in Peace and Safety, whilst all the rest of *Judea* was brought to Desolation. *Josephus* adds, that after the Wars were ended, *Titus* sent Sixty Thousand *Jews* as a Present to his Father *Vespasian* at *Rome*, to be put to Death as he pleased, and affirms, that he saw with his own

Eyes, Fifteen Hundred murdered in one Day; by Combate among themselves, and fighting with wild Beasts for the Emperor's Diversion. Others were made Bonfires of in times of Triumph. Others condemned to the Quarries, to dig and hew Stones all their Lives. After this, an innumerable multitude were destroyed by *Adrian*; who at length sent *Severus* his Lieutenant to extinguish the whole Race of them, who ruined ninety eight Towns and Villages, and slew five hundred and fourscore Thousand *Jews* in one Day; he likewise rased the Walls and ancient Buildings of *Jerusalem*, so that one stone was not left upon another, and changed the Name of it to *Eliab*, after that of his Master *Elias Adrianus*; and made a Law, that it should be Death for any Jewish Slave ever to return thither, or so much as to look from any high Place toward that Country again. This terrible Judgment fell upon the Jews for the accomplishing their own Demand to have Jesus Crucified, and crying out with one Consent, *Let his Blood be upon us and our Children.*

6. Lastly, as this sufficiently declares the Divinity of our Blessed Lord, so the fulfilling of all his Sayings and Prophecies while upon Earth, is a further Confirmation thereof. How often did he with much Vehemence threaten Woes to the Scribes and Pharisees, telling them, that all the Righteous Blood shed upon Earth from that of *Abel* to *Zecharias*, should be avenged upon that Generation; that the Days should come that *Jerusalem* should be compassed with Armies, and their Enemies should cast a Trench about it, and should lay it even with the Ground, and not leave one Stone upon another, and slay their Children; and they should fall by the Sword, and be led away Captive into all Nations, and *Jerusalem* should be trodden down of the *Gentiles*, with many other Particulars. These Desolations Jesus foretold should fall upon

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the *Jews* at that very time when they were at Peace with the *Romans*, and there was no human probability of such Calamities impending over them, which yet exactly came to pass.

This occasioned *Phelegon*, an Heathen Historian in the time of the Emperor *Adrian*, about one hundred Years after Christ's Death, who took special Notice of all our Saviour's Prophecies, as well about the Destruction of the *Jews*, as the lamentable Persecutions of the Christians, to write, *That never any Man upon Earth predicted so punctually of future Events, as Jesus Christ did.* And this Testimony St. *Origen* Alleges against *Celsus*, an Heathen Philosopher and Epicure, even the very next Age after the Author writ it, which confirms the Truth thereof.

Many other Instances might be given of our Saviour's Predictions which were punctually fulfill'd, though there was no Reason, nor human Probability thereof : Namely, The foretelling the Manner, Time and Place, of his own Death ; The Person that should betray him, and his desperate End : The Flight and Fear of his Disciples, tho' they had given such strong Assurances not to forsake him : The three Denials of St. *Peter* ; the time of his own Resurrection and Ascension ; the sending of the Holy Ghost ; and many other Prophecies and Promises uttered to his Apostles, Disciples and Followers, all which were afterward fully accomplish'd, and were evident Proofs of the Divinity of Jesus. If it be objected by the Deists, that these Prophecies were recorded by the Evangelists after they were fulfill'd, and consequently that they might be their own Inventions : To silence these Infidels, we may find several Events predicted, and published in Writing before they came to pass ; such as the manner of St. *Peter's* Death while he was alive ; the cruel Persecution that would fall upon the Christians for his sake, of which there was very

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little likelihood, the *Romans* at that time giving Liberty to the Exercise of all Religion; and many other Instances that might be given.

To conclude; by all that has been said, three Things of high Importance have been manifested.

1. That from the Creation there have been Promises in all Times and Ages that a Messiah and Saviour should come into the World, in whom all Nations should be blessed, with the Time, Manner and Circumstances of his Coming, and of his Person, Doctrine, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension.
2. That all the Particulars concerning him, set down by the Holy Prophets, were exactly fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
3. That our Blessed Saviour gave likewise many other infallible Signs, Manifestations, Demonstrations and Arguments of his Deity and Omnipotent Power after his Ascension into Heaven. By all which Ways, Means and Proofs, and by a thousand more, which might be added, all good Christians may be firmly perswaded of the Truth of their Religion. Let us all then endeavour to come to the true Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to have a saving Faith in him, and not to be contented only with an outward Profession of Christianity, without the Power thereof, and so find our selves in the number of those miserable Souls, to whom Christ shall say at the great Day, *Depart from me, for I know you not*: But may have our Portion among those Holy Souls, to whom our Lord shall give that joyful Welcome, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

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T H E
Lives, Acts and Deaths,
Of the Holy
Evangelists and Apostles
Of our LORD and SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST.

Collected from the Ancient Fathers, and
other Authors of undoubted Credit and
Authority.

The Proem.

HAVING already given some Account of the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of our Blessed Lord, the true Messiah and Saviour of the World: It may not be improper to add hereunto the Lives of the Holy Evangelists and Apostles, among whom the Lives of St. Paul and St. Barnabas are likewise inserted, not only because they lived in the Apostles Days, and were joined with them in the Performance of the same Office as well as St. Mark and St. Luke; but because they were honoured with the Name of Apostles by the Spirit of God in the Holy Scriptures; and tho' they were not call'd to that high Function by Christ himself in Person when he was upon Earth, yet they were extraordinarily Commission'd to be Apostles of Christ, and deservedly acquir'd this Title.

128 The Life of St. MATTHEW,

The Life of St. *Matthew* the Apostle and Evangelist, who was slain with an Halbert in *Ethiopia*.



ST. *Matthew*, called also *Levi*, was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, the Son of *Alpheus* a Galilean, and of *Mary*, the Kinswoman of the Blessed Virgin. He is said to be born either at *Capernaum* or *Nazareth*, and was by Profession a Publican, or a Collector of the Taxes imposed upon the Jews by the Roman Emperors, which was accounted by them an Office of Profit as well as Honour; however, it was very scandalous among the Jews, by reason of their Exortions and Abuses to enrich themselves, and was thought by the Followers of Christ to be unlawful, because they made Men pay for the use of those Elements of Air, Earth and Water, which God hath

hath bestowed upon them freely. Infomuch that Publicans and Sinners were Synonymous Terms among the Jews; and the Gentiles had a Proverb, *That Publicans were Extortioners and Thieves*. However, this was no hindrance to the Effectual Call of Christ, who coming from *Capernaum*, where he had cured a sick Man of the Palsy, *St. Mat. 21. 31.* and walking by the Sea of *Galilee*, he observed *Matthew* taking Toll of those that Traffick'd upon the Lake, and calling him to a near Attendance upon him, *Matthew* made no Delay nor Excuse about settling his Accounts, but immediately rose up and followed him. Doubtless, *St. Matthew* was one of Jesus's Disciples before, or at least had heard much of him at *Capernaum*, where Christ often resorted and preached, which was a great Preparative to his ready Obedience, and leaving that Calling, to which, 'tis thought, he never again return'd, as some other Apostles did to their innocent Employments of Fishermen, Tent-makers, &c.

He was the first of the Evangelists that writ the Gospel and History of our Saviour, at the entreaty of the Jewish Converts at *Jerusalem*, by the appointment of the Apostles, about eight, (some say fifteen) Years after our Saviour's Death, and indeed it was reasonable, that he who was first converted from his great and scandalous Sins, should be the publisher of that Saviour, who came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance, of which he had so early an Experience.

St. Austin observes, that this Evangelist is very exact in his Account of the Royal Extraction of our Saviour, and in his describing the Life he led upon Earth, whereas *St. John* soars higher, and immediately declares the Divinity of our Lord. His Writings also seem more Pious and Instructive to the Capacity of the meanest, since he more particularly touches on the Actions and Discourses, with

which our Saviour did, as it were, qualifie his Divine Wisdom and Majesty, that his Example may be in some measure imitable and proportionable to our Weakness, 'tis no way to be doubted, but that God had great reason to cause his Laws to be written; yet we may say, Christ's chief Design has ever been to write them in our Hearts, that so our Actions might be visible Characters of that invisible Love he bears to us, and which we ought to shew to each other. It is affirm'd, that St. *Bartholomew* carry'd St. *Matthew's* Gospel along with him to *India*, and there left it. For *Pontanus* preaching the Faith in the *Indies* found there a Copy of it in *Hebrew*, which he brought to *Alexandria*, and it was preserv'd to his time in the Library of *Cæsarea*; which Original being lost, we have only the *Greek* Version, whose Author is unknown, tho' it is attributed both to St. *James* and St. *John*. Another Copy was found by the *Nazarenes* in *Berea*, in the time of St. *Jerom*, as he himself affirms, adding withal, that he obtained leave of the *Nazarenes* to Transcribe theirs, and that he afterwards Translated it into *Greek* and *Latin*. And another was said to be found in digging up the Grave of St. *Barnabas*, Anno Dom. 485. being a Transcript of the Apostle's own Writing. But of all those Copies, we hear not of any now extant. However, the *Greek* Translation done by St. *John* and St. *James*, hath been all along generally received as Authentick, and therefore reckon'd among the Canonical Books of Holy Scripture. Several other Books are attributed to St. *Matthew*; as the History of the Infancy of Christ; His Ethiopick Liturgy, and some others; but these are rejected as false and forg'd Writings. Some affirm, he was the Author of one Article in the Creed, which was composed at *Jerusalem* by the common Consent of the Apostles, which Opinion seems both Ridiculous and Groundless.

After

After his being Elected to the Apostleship, he continued among them 'till our Lord's Ascension, and the sending down the Holy Ghost upon them on the Day of Pentecost, and then pursuant to the Command of Christ to his Apostles, To Go, and teach all Nations; 'tis said, that for about Eight Years he Preach'd up and down *India*, and Travelled from thence into *Ethiopia*, *Persia*, and *Parthia*, where he Preached the Gospel for some Years, and at last suffered Martyrdom at *Naddabar* in *Ethiopia*; but what sort of Death is uncertain; some say, he was slain with an Halbert; others, that he dy'd a Natural Death, having by his Prayers extinguish'd the Fire that was kindled to burn him. Sr. *Chrysostom* supposes, that he dyed about the 70th Year after Christ, when *Jerusalem* was destroy'd by the *Romans*, according to our Saviour's Predictions; some will have it, that he was bury'd in *Ethiopia*; others at *Hierapolis* in *Parthia*; one of the first places where he preach'd to the *Gentiles*. The *Roman Church* keep his Festival *September 21.* and the *Greeks Nov. 16.*

The Life of St. *Mark* the Evangelist, who was dragged through the Streets upon the Stones, 'till he expir'd.



ST. *Mark*, though a *Roman* by Name, yet certainly believ'd to be of Jewish Parentage, and descended from the Tribe of *Levi*, and *Nicephorus* says, was Sister's Son to St. *Peter*, tho' some have confounded him with St. *John* fir-named *Mark*, the Son of *Mary*; others with *Mark* Sister's Son to *Barnabas*; it is generally allow'd, That he was one of the Seventy Disciples, yet not a Follower of our Saviour, but a later Convert by some of the Apostles; most probably by St. *Peter*, whose constant Attendant, Interpreter, Amanuensis or Writer, some say he was; for he was sent to *Egypt* by St. *Peter*, to plant the Gospel in those Parts, and spent his

his time at *Alexandria*, where 'tis said he founded a Church, which was the second Episcopal See. And in this City and Parts adjacent he converted great Multitudes, not only to embrace the Christian Religion, but the Profession of a more than ordinary strict and religious Life, and are thought by *Eusebius*, *St. Jerom* and others, to be the *Therapeuts*, living about the *Mereotick Lake*, who were Men of a most severe Conversation, and wholly devoted to a studious Solitude.

His Gospel was written by him at the Instance of the Converted Jews at *Rome*, who press'd him to draw in Writing by way of History what his Master *St. Peter* had often Preached to them; which done, it was perus'd by *St. Peter*, ratify'd by his Authority, and publickly read by his Order in their Religious Assemblies. There is some Dispute whether it was written in *Greek* or *Latin*. The *Romanists*, who pretend to the latter, alledge, That his Gospel being principally design'd for the Use of the Converts of *Rome*, it was necessary to be put into that Language; but as *Dr. Cave* observes, it was no less proper for *St. Mark* to write his Gospel in *Greek* for the Use of the *Romans*, than that *St. Paul* should in the same Tongue write his Epistle to that Church; and the *Greek* being then the modish Language there, it was probably most spoken by Strangers and Jews, who understood very little *Latin*; and there were very few *Romans*, of any Fashion, but understood *Greek*.

St. Chrysostom demands, Why our Saviour having Twelve Apostles, there were but Two of them, namely, *St. Matthew* and *St. John*, that undertook to write the Gospel; and that *St. Mark* should write it as well as *St. Luke*, altho' they were only the Disciples of the Apostles, and not Apostles themselves; to which he answers himself, That such Holy Men did nothing through a Desire of Glory, but

but guided themselves in all things by the Motions of the Divine Spirit, and by a prospect of the Good of the Church. That Father likewise in his third Homily upon St. *Matthew*, remarks the Concileness of St. *Mark's* Stile, agreeable to that of St. *Peter*, where he expresses a great deal in a few Words ; and tho' he has follow'd St. *Matthew* in his Historical Acts of our Saviour, yet in some places he epitomizeth him, and in others relates Matters more at large, and with their particular Circumstances. As to the last Chapter of his Gospel, or part of it, which is by some rejected, as disagreeing in some things with the other Gospels, and said to be wanting in all ancient *Greek* Copies, St. *Jerom* does so reconcile them, that he makes them fairly consistent with each other. He writ his Gospel in the third Year of the Reign of the Emperor *Claudius*, and the forty-third from the Birth of our Saviour, Ten Years after his Crucifixion ; being the only Book left behind him bearing his Name, which was either dictated to him by St. *Peter*, and therefore frequently called St. *Peter's* Gospel ; or rather compos'd out of the Account which St. *Peter* usually deliver'd in his Discourses to the People.

'Tis observable, That whatsoever Care our Lord Jesus took to teach his Apostles during his Life, by making them Spectators, not only of his publick Actions, but of his secret and private Life, and by discovering to them the Mysteries and Parables which he spake in publick ; yet they have said nothing of our Saviour, and of his Holy Vertues, of which they were so perfectly informed, 'till they were renewed by the Holy Spirit, and were become in some sort Divine Men, as St. *Chrysostom* calls 'em.

St. *Mark* discovers much Zeal and Ardency in the Propagation of the Christian Faith. For after he had by his Ministry converted Multitudes of both Sexes at *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, to a zealous Profession

of

of the Gospel, he went from thence Westward to the Regions of *Lybia*, *Marmorica*, *Pentapolis*, and other barbarous Countries of *Africa*, where by his Preaching and Miracles he inclined the Minds of those Gentiles to embrace the Gospel of Christ, and confirmed them in their new Faith. He then returned to *Alexandria* to settle the Church, and provide Pastors for them, where notwithstanding the long Stay he there made, with the great Pains he took, the Inhabitants were so much concerned for their old Pagan Idolatry, that it was an occasion of hastening his Martyrdom: For it being about the time of our *Easter*, while he was employ'd in the Divine Worship, the great Enemy of God and Man incited the Favourers of Idolatry to make a Tumult against our Evangelist: It happen'd that the great Solemnity of their God *Serapis* being at that time to be Celebrated, the prophane *Egyptians* being inrag'd at his Aversion to their Religion, and maintaining another so contrary thereunto, they, to vindicate their Idol, broke into the Place where *St. Mark* was at his Devotions, and tying Cords to his Feet, dragged him on the Ground through the Streets to the Prison, where in the Night he had the Comfort of a Divine Vision. The Rage of the People being not yet satisfy'd, they came the next Day early in the Morning, and again dragged him about over the Stones and rough Places through the City, to a Place a little out of the Town, called *Bacelus*, by which barbarous Usage, his Body was so torn and bruis'd, that he expir'd in their Cruel Hands, and the remainder of his Carcass was said to be carry'd to *Venice*, tho' *Metaphrastes* relates, That the Fury of the Idolaters did not end with his Murder, but that they burnt his dead Body, whose Soul had burnt with an ardent Devotion for the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Mankind, and that the Christians did decently Intomb his Bones and Ashes,

near

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near the Place where he used to Preach ; and that the *Venetians* afterwards removed them from thence to their Capital City, where they are still held in great Veneration, and St. *Mark* is adopted for the Patron and Tutelar Saint of that State : To whose Memory they Erected and Dedicated their Cathedral, one of the stateliest, richest, and most magnificent Churches perhaps in the World. The Original *Greek* Copy of his Gospel is said to be likewise in their Possession, pretended to be written with his own Hand in *Aquilea* ; and thence translated to *Venice* after many Ages ; but the Letters are so worn out, that they cannot be read. The Learned are not agreed about the time of his Martyrdom ; but the most probable Opinion is, That he suffer'd about the end of the Empire of the Tyrant *Nero*, and that he surviv'd the Martyrdom both of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* a considerable time.

His Festival is observed by the *Roman* Church upon the 25th of *April*.

The

The Life of *St. Luke* the Evangelist, who
was hanged on an Olive Tree.



ST. *Luke*, without Controversy, was born at *Antioch*, the chief City of *Syria*, famous for being one of the most flourishing Academies of the World, replenish'd with Schools of good Literature, and Eminent Professors of all Arts and Sciences, as also being the Place where the Disciples first took the Name of Christians. Having got a Foundation of Learning in *Antioch*, and other Schools both of *Greece* and *Egypt*, he particularly apply'd himself to the Study of Physick, in which he became a great Proficient. But our Evangelist, of a Physician of the Body, became a Physician of the Soul. He is also said to be skilful in Painting; And for Proof thereof

thereof, there is an Ancient Inscription near *St. Mary's Church at Rome*, wherein mention is made of a Picture of the *Virgin Mary*, in these Words, *UNA Ex VII AB LUCA DEPICTIS: One of the Seven Painted by Luke.*

'Tis generally believ'd, *St. Luke* was Converted by *St. Paul* at his first being at *Antioch*, and not at *Thebes* in *Greece*, as some write. Others make him a Jewish Profelyte, that is, a Jew Converted to Christianity, *Antioch* abounding with Jews, who had their Synagogues and Schools of Education therein, and consequently, that he was no Follower of Christ in the Flesh, as is apparent by his own Confession in the beginning of his Gospel. However, after his Conversion, he became the constant Companion, and Fellow-Labourer, with *St. Paul* in the Ministry of the Gospel, whom he accompany'd in all his Dangers, and in his several Arraignments at *Jerusalem*, and in his Voyages to *Rome*, continually to serve him in all Necessities, and supplying his Office in those Matters which he could not perform by reason of his Imprisonment: And for his Diligence, *St. Paul* calls him his Brother, Fellow-Labourer, and beloved Physician. His Writings, which are contain'd in two Books, namely, his Gospel, and his History of *The Acts of the Apostles*, written in *Greek* for the Use of the Church, are so exact and accurate, so polite and elegant, in a lofty, clear, and perspicuous Style, that they manifest how great a share he had in the Native Genius of *Antioch*, his Birth-place, where 'tis thought the first was written, during his Travels with *St. Paul*, who 'tis suppos'd assisted him in the composing the same, insomuch, as it has been called *St. Paul's Gospel*; which might seem probable enough, did not *St. Luke* expressly declare, That whatsoever he writ in this Gospel, he received from the Testimony of those who from the beginning had been Eye-witnesses

witnesses of all our Saviour's Works and Transactions. And this, says St. *Austin*, came to pass by the wise Council of God, that of the four Evangelists, should not be so, that it might appear there was no Difference in the Writings of those that saw the Actions of our Saviour, and of those that related them from the faithful Accounts they had from them that had seen them; God Almighty designing in this manner to shew us, that the Certainty of Evangelical History depends not only upon those, that Writ those Things they had seen; which is ordinary in Human and Moral History; but that the Holy Spirit dictated all their Words to the Evangelists, as well as to St. *Mark* and St. *Luke*, who were Disciples to the Apostles, as St. *Matthew* and St. *John*, who were Apostles themselves. He writ his Gospel about the Year fifty-six; which with the *Acts of the Apostles*, he dedicated to *Theophilus*, with the Title of *Most Excellent*, a Person of considerable Honour and Quality, and probably some Magistrate of *Antioch*, Converted and Baptized by himself, to whom he relates the Motive that induc'd him thereto, saying, that several having hastily undertook to write the Evangelical History, he thought himself obliged to do it, after an exact Information from those who had been the Dispersers and Ministers thereof, and especially from St. *Paul*, to hinder the Word of the Gospel from being sophisticated by the mixture of Error and Falshood.

The History of the *Acts of the Apostles* was doubtless writ at *Rome*, when he was there with St. *Paul* in his first Imprisonment. In his Gospel he chiefly insists upon those things which relate to the Sacerdotal Office of Christ, and supplies what seem'd wanting in both the precedent Gospels of St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*. In the *Acts of the Apostles*, he not only relates the Actions, but also the Sufferings

rings of some of the chief of the Apostles, and St. Paul especially, of whose Carriage and most intimate Transactions, St. Luke was best able to give a true Account, having been his constant Attendant, and enlarges particularly upon the great Miracles wrought by the Apostles, as being the grand Confirmation of the Truth of Christ's Resurrection. So far as he Travell'd with St. Paul, and was his Coadjutor in the Ministry, we have a certain Account of in Scripture; but where he Preached afterward, is not so apparent. Some say, he went Eastward, and Preached in *Egypt*, and several Parts of *Lybia*. Others that he planted the Faith first in *Dalmatia* and *France*, and then in *Italy* and *Macedonia*. His Death is altogether as uncertain, whether it were Natural or Violent. Some say, he died in *Egypt*, others in *Greece*, and *Bythnia*. *Nicophorus* writes, that as he was zealously Preaching in *Greece*, the common People seiz'd him, and for want of a Cross, Hang'd or Crucify'd him upon an Olive or Walnut Tree, in the Forty-eighth Year of his Age, being never marry'd. But *Histricus* from the *Arabick* Copy affirms, he was Martyr'd at *Rome*, after St. Paul's first Imprisonment there, and Departure thence, leaving St. Luke behind to supply his Place, which, he says, was the reason why he no longer continued his History of *The Acts of the Apostles*.

His Festival is celebrated *October 18.*

The

The Life of *St. John the Apostle and Evangelist*, who was put into a Caldron of scalding Oyl, and came out unhurt.



ST. John was of the Town of *Bethsaida*, the Son of *Zebedee*, and Brother to *St. James*, named the Great. Some have thought he was the Disciple of *John the Baptist*, who went with *St. Andrew* to *Jesus*. His Conversion is uncertain, but the miraculous Draught of Fishes at *Christ's* Command made them all Captives to his Doctrine, so that he with his Parents became inseparable Companions, and Attendants of him, leaving his Father and all Worldly Concerns to follow him. He was present at the Cure of *Peter's Wife's Mother*, the raising of *Jairus's Daughter*, and the Transfiguration
on

on in the Mount with his Brother *James*. To whom our *Saviour* committed the Care and Maintenance of his Mother, the Blessed Virgin; and she, on the other hand, was advised to consider him as her Son, upon which he took her to his House, and gave her all the accommodation his condition afforded, which *Nicephorus* says, was no way contemptible, he selling an Estate left him by his Father in *Galilee*, and purchasing an House in *Jerusalem* of *Annis* the High Priest, which probably procured him such an Interest in that Court, that he was able to introduce *St. Peter* into the Great Hall, or Place of Judicature.

Jesus Christ, when he called him to the Apostleship, gave him and his Brother, the Name of *Boanerges*, or *The Sons of Thunder*; to shew the strength and greatness of their Faith, and because they were design'd to publish the Majesty of God through all the World; and indeed *St. John* might be well termed so, he so clearly proving the Divinity of our blessed Lord in most sublime Expressions. He was thought to be the youngest of the Apostles, being not above 26 Years old when he was called. *St. Austin* believed that Jesus Christ shew'd him particular Kindness, that he might give the greater Authority to those great Truths which he was to declare to Mankind, and *St. John* deserv'd that Love, not only because he loved Christ above all, but was likewise very Peaceable and Meek, and so like Christ himself; and therefore, when he desir'd our Saviour to call for Fire from Heaven to destroy the *Samaritans* who would not receive him, it proceeded from a singular Affection to him, as did also his desiring to sit with his Brother *James* at the Right and Left Hand of Christ, he being ambitious of a near Injoymment of him in his Glory, and counting it his chief Happiness to have the Marks of his Favour, as well in the future, as the present Life. *St. John* was sent with

with St. *Peter* to find out a convenient Place to Celebrate the Passover in ; at which Supper, wherein Christ left to all the Christians the Pledges of his Love, St. *John* received a signal Token of his Love, in leaning on his Bosom, as he usually did, saith St. *Austin*, when he eat with him ; which the Apostle himself mentions several times : And some of the Fathers are of Opinion, he was thereby filled with the most sublime and heavenly Mysteries from the Bosom of the Son of God, that he might discover them to Men by his Gospel, Epistles and Revelations, and that he related this particular Kindness of Christ to him, lest Men should think he attributed it to himself, or was the Author of what he had receiv'd from the Blessed Spirit of God.

After our Saviour's Resurrection, St. *John* was the first that gave *Peter* notice of his Appearance, of which *Mary Magdalen* informed him, and coming to the Sepulchre, and finding the Linnen Cloaths lie wrap'd up by themselves, they both concluded that his Body was stolen, being ignorant as yet, that he was to rise again from the Dead, tho' they were afterwards convinced of it by Christ's frequent Appearing to them. St. *John* continued at his House at *Jerusalem*, 'till the Death of the Virgin *Mary*, which (as *Eusebius* saith) was in the Year of our Lord 48. And sometime after took his Journey into *Asia*, as falling to his Lot, and founded the Churches of *Smyrna*, *Thyatira*, *Pergamus*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, *Laodicea*, &c. From thence 'tis thought he went Eastward, and preached in *Parthia*, to which People, 'tis said, his first Epistle was directed ; and the Jesuits who have Travelled those Countries relate, That *Bassira*, a People in *India*, have a constant Tradition, that the Gospel was preached among them by St. *John*. Having thus spent many Years, *Domitian* the Roman Emperor publishing an Edict for the destroying all Christians, our Blessed Apostle

Apostle was sent bound to *Rome* by the Proconsul of *Asia*, as a disturber of the Peace of the Empire, where he was treated with all the Cruelty that brutish Rage could suggest : For the Tyrant commanded him to be thrown into a Caldron of scalding Oil, all in a Flame, in the Presence of all the Senate ; but Jesus Christ, who favoured him above all the Apostles, so preserved him in this danger, that like the three *Hebrew Children*, he felt no harm thereby, so that he came out more vigorous than before, having the Honour of Martyrdom without suffering the Torments of it, or being left in the Power of bloody Men to hurt his precious Life. In this manner was fulfill'd what our Lord had foretold, *That he should drink of the Cup of his Passion* ; and hence the Ancients gave him the Title of a Martyr, since he willingly yielded his Body to all its Tortures. But this great Miracle having no Effect upon the obdurate Heart of the stupid Emperor, he was banish'd into the Isle of *Patmos*, which is one of the Isles of the *Sporades* in the *Ægean Sea*, to be employed in digging in the Mines. In which disconsolate place, being filled with Divine Inspiration, he writ the Book of his Revelations. After the Death of *Domitian*, who was slain for his Tyranny, the Senate disannulled all his Acts, and St. *John* returned to *Ephesus*, under the mild Government of *Nerva*, and St. *Timothy*, the former Bishop being Martyr'd for preaching against the Lewdness and Idolatry of the Heathen Feasts, he continued here, and wrote his Gospel upon this Occasion, as *Jerom* relates.

Cerintus and *Ebion*, publishing their Heresie, that Jesus Christ was but a Man, almost all the Bishops of *Asia*, and several others deputed by the Churches, oblig'd St. *John* to defend the Divinity of our Saviour more particularly than the other Three Evangelists had done, by whose Entreaties he was at length overcome ; and whereas the other

other Evangelists, do more particularly describe the Actions of our Saviour, which are an admirable Pattern for us. St. *John* rather insists upon Spiritual Truths, which denote the Mystery of the Trinity, the Equality of the Persons, and the Glory of the Life to come; and doth effectually recommend to us the Love of our Brethren. He lived to the beginning of *Trajan's* Reign, being aged about Ninety Eight Years. St. *Chrysostom* and *Dorotheus* affirm, that he writ his Gospel when he was an hundred Years old, and lived twenty Years after. Some say, he dy'd a Martyr; others believe that he never dy'd from the Words of our Saviour, *What if I will that he stay till I come?* Tho' the Apostle says, he himself never understood it so. *Epiphanius* reports, that he observed a very strict way of Living, never cut his Hair, nor bathed himself, nor eat the Flesh of any Creature, and wore only one Coat and a Linnen Garment. By reason of Age, not being able to go to the Christian Assemblies, he was carried thither by his Scholars, St. *Ignatius*, *Polycarpus*, &c. where getting into the Pulpit, he only said, *My Dear Children, love one another*: they being at length wearied to hear no more, he told them, *This is that which our Lord hath commanded; and if we can do this, we need do nothing else.* St. *Austin* says, that in his time it went for current that St. *John* was sleeping in his Grave. *Nicephorus* relates the following Story at large.

' St. *John*, saith he, foreseeing his Translation, went with the Presbyters and Ministers of the Church at *Ephesus*, and others of the Faithful, to a Cemetery or Burying-place, a little way out of the City, whether he was wont to retire for his Devotion, and after he had pray'd a while with them, and instructed them in the most secret Mysteries of Divinity, he ordered a Grave to be made, and then taking his leave of them, and giving them his Benediction, he went down into it in sight of
G them

- them all, charging them to put on the Grave-stone,
- and to fasten it, and the next Day to come and
- open it, which accordingly they did ; but found
- only the Grave-cloaths.

Eusebius says, he dy'd Sixty-eight Years after the Death of Christ, and was bury'd in the City of *Ephesus*, his Body remaining there in his Sepulchre, waiting with the rest of the Saints for the Resurrection of the last Day. His Festival is celebrated December 27.

The Life of St. *Peter* the Apostle, who was Crucify'd with his Head downward at *Rome*.



ST. *Peter*, stil'd the Prince of the Apostles, is generally accounted the Son of *Jonah* a Fisher-

man

man at *Bethsaida* in the upper *Galilee*, belonging to the Tribe of *Naphtali*, on the Banks of the Sea of *Tiberius*, or Lake of *Gennesareth*. It is said he was Born three Years before the Blessed Virgin, in the Year of the World 4034. At his Circumcision, he receiv'd the name of *Simon* or *Simeon*, to which our Saviour added that of *Cephas*, which signifies a Stone or Rock, from whence *Peter* became his usual Name: Both he and his younger Brother *Andrew*, were from their Childhood brought up in the Fishing Trade; as were likewise *James* and *John*, the Sons of *Zebedee*, and these four were the first that Jesus receiv'd into the number of his Disciples; wherein we may observe, as is already noted, the vast Difference between the Methods of Divine Providence, and the Ways of the World; for whereas the generality of Mankind admire only outward Pomp and Shew, and pin their Faith upon those of great Fame for Learning and Wisdom; Christ, in the Founding of his Church, made use of the meanest, obscurest, and most Illiterate Persons, to confound, and put to silence the Wisdom of the Philosophers of the World, and thereby propagated the Divine Truths, which neither Human Wit nor Policy was able to withstand. St. *Peter* after his Communication with our Lord for a while, return'd to his Fishing-Trade, but after our Saviour had confirm'd his Doctrine by such a miraculous Draught of Fish, and had strengthened his staggering Faith, he left all and followed him.

After our Saviour's Ascension, the Apostles with one Consent return'd to *Jerusalem*, spending their Time in Prayer, and other Exercises of Devotion, as we read in the *Acts of the Apostles*, where is likewise an Account of St. *Peter's* Preaching, Travels and Sufferings; for the remainder of his Life, we must depend upon the Fathers, and Ancient Writers of the Church. *Eusebius* affirms, that in the time he was

at *Antioch*, he there founded a Church, and was the first Bishop thereof; what became of him after his Deliverance from *Herod's* Imprisonment, is not certainly known; some say, he Preach'd at *Byzantium*, now *Constantinople*, and the Countries adjacent; and went thence to *Rome*, in the second Year of the Emperor *Claudius*: That removing thither to Preach to the *Gentiles*, he was received into the House of one *Pudens* a Roman Senator, newly converted to the Faith, and that in this City he met with *Philo*, surnamed *Judeus*, who became Ambassador to *Rome*, in behalf of the *Jews* at *Alexandria*, with whom he contracted an intimate Familiarity. Much about this time, *Baronius* is of Opinion, he writ his first Epistle to the Churches he had planted in *Asia the Less*; Namely, *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Bitthynia*, &c. *St. Mark*, as he observes, being with him at the writing of this Epistle in his Journey to *Egypt*, whither he was going to Preach the Gospel, the *Jews* being Banish'd from *Rome* by *Claudius*, for an Uproar they made there; and so we hear no more of him 'till the latter end of *Nero's* Reign, tho' no doubt but he went on in his Ministry, either in *Sicily*, *Italy*, or *Africa*: Yea, some tell us, that he came over to our Island of *Britain*; but this is only Conjectural.

Being returned to *Rome*, he found the Minds of many possess'd with the subtle cheats and devices of *Simon Magus*, so that he was accounted a God, being in high esteem with *Nero* himself, who was a particular Favourer of the Magicians, and their Diabolical Arts. *St. Peter* resolving to unmask the Tricks and Delusions of this vile Impostor, a fit occasion presented it self, as it is recorded by *Hegesippus* the Younger, an Author of good Credit, and Contemporary with *St. Ambrose*. 'There died
' at this time, saith he, a Young Gentleman near
' of Kin to the Emperor, for the raising of whom

to Life, there was a great Contest between *St. Peter* and the Magician; the latter challeng'd the Apostle to perform the same, who being strong in Faith, readily accepted thereof, and when *Magus* and the Devil were both baffled, not being able to effect this great Miracle, *St. Peter*, by the Power of God, restored the Person to Life; the People being enraged to see how the Sorcerer had impos'd upon them, were ready to have stoned him to Death, had not the Apostle's Charity and Generosity rescued him; yet this had so little Influence upon him, that a while after he had the Presumption or Folly to enter upon another Bold Undertaking, which was, that he would fly up to Heaven; but his Artificial Wings, or his two Invisible Devils, as 'tis said, failing him, he fell to the Ground with such broken Bones and Bruises as in a few days put an end to all his boasted Forgeries, together with his Life. The unhappy end of this deluding Wretch, instead of bringing *St. Peter* into great Favour with the Roman Tyrant, and his Doctrine into higher Esteem, did but the more exasperate his obdurate Mind, who regarding the Fallacies of an Impostor, more than the Reality of a Divine Miracle, and not enduring the severe Reproofs of a Religion so Repugnant to his vicious Courses, became a sworn Enemy to the Professors thereof; and resolving to revenge the loss of this great Favourite, upon him whom he judg'd the occasion of his Death, he caused him to be Apprehended and Committed to the Mamertine Prison. *St. Ambrose* Reports, That the Christians importuned him to make his Escape from thence for the Benefit of the Church, and that being overcome with their Intreaties, he, tho' unwilling, escaped over the Walls of the Prison by Night; but as he pass'd through the Gate, saith the Father, he met with a Person in the Form of Christ his Master, and knowing him, Saluted him, though much surprized

with these words, *Lord, whither art thou going?* But the Answer he receiv'd was, *I am come to Rome to be Crucify'd a second time.* Which he taking as a Reproof for his Cowardise in fleeing from his Persecutors, apply'd it so home to himself, that he return'd back into the City, and render'd himself to the Keeper of the Prison, where St. Paul was also: resolving to suffer with cheerfulness the Death appointed for him. Here they were kept eight or nine Months in strict Imprisonment, spending their time in all private Acts of Devotion, and as occasion offer'd, Preached the Gospel to their Keepers and Fellow-Prisoners; of which it is said they converted *Procellas* and *Martyriam*, the Captains of their Guards, with forty seven others.

St. Peter having glorify'd God by an holy Life, Zealous in publishing the Gospel, and Constancy in Suffering, he was at length called to his Martyrdom, to honour his Master with dying for him, whose Words were then fulfill'd; *When thou shalt be Old, thou shalt stretch forth thy Hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee where thou wouldest not,* John 21. 18. Nero, partly to revenge the Death of *Simon Magus*, and partly to avoid the Odium which he had brought upon himself for setting Rome on Fire, fell upon the Christians, as the Persons guilty of the Fact, and stirred up a bloody Persecution against them at Rome, and in other Places of the World. And St. Peter (together with St. Paul) were sentenced to be Crucify'd, being the shamefullest Death they could inflict upon Malefactors. But our holy Apostle fearing lest he should seem to affect an equal Glory with his Lord and Master in his Suffering, he obtained the Favour, at his earnest Request, to be Crucify'd with his Head downward. After his Execution, his Body being taken down, was enbalm'd after the Jewish manner, and was bury'd in the *Vatican*, near the Way call'd *Via*

Triumphalis,

Triumphalis, as *Eusebius*, and other Ecclesiastical Writers deliver. Over his Grave, saith *Onesophorus*, was built a small Church, upon the Destruction of which by the Tyrant *Heliogabalus*, his Body was remov'd to a Burying Place in the *Appian Way*, not far from *Rome*, but by Pope *Cornelius* it was carried back again to the *Vatican*; which after Thirty Years of Obscurity, it was by the Emperor *Constantine the Great* (amongst several other Churches he erected at *Rome*) rais'd to a most Magnificent Structure in Honour of *St. Peter*, extraordinarily enrich'd and Adorn'd, and every Age since having added to its Splendor, it may justly now be reckoned one of the Wonders of the World. Thus liv'd and thus dy'd this Venerable Apostle, about the Year of our Lord Sixty nine, in the thirteenth or fourteenth of *Nero's* Reign. There is a Tradition that he had one Daughter nam'd *Petronilla*, and that his Wife suffered Martyrdom for the Christian Faith long before his Death by his Encouragement and Admonition; but little Credit is given to these Relations.

His Festival is upon *June 29.*

The Life of *St. Andrew* the Apostle, who was ty'd to a Cross, from whence he Preached to the People.



ST. *Andrew* was a Native of the City of *Bethsaida*, in *Galilee*, the Son of a certain Jew named *Jonas* or *John*, and was the Brother of *St. Peter*, yet not so much by Nature as Grace. It is not determin'd which of them was the Eldest, they dwelt together in *Capernaum*, being both of the same Employment, namely, Fishing in the Lake of *Gennesareth*. *St. Epiphanius* believes, he was one of the Disciples of *St. John the Baptist*; not that he always attended upon him, but went frequently to hear him, and returned to his Business again. Of all the Twelve Apostles, *St. Andrew* is the first mention'd by Name, to have
been

been a Follower and a Disciple of Christ, for being one Day with *John* the Baptist, and hearing him say as Jesus passed by, *That he was the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World.* *Andrew*, who knew the Paschal Lamb to be the Type of the Messiah, that was to be a Sacrifice for the Sins of Mankind; he thereby was fully convinc'd that Jesus was the Christ, and followed him (with another of *John's* Disciples) as the Saviour of the World; and being invited by Jesus to his House, they went and Abode with them the remaining part of that Day, (for it was about four a Clock in the Afternoon when they met him) and the next Night, hearing his Instructions, and improving their Faith by Conferring with him, *Andrew* who was Christ's first Scholar, had no sooner obtained the Knowledge of the Messiah, and was confirmed in that Faith that Jesus was he, but he met with his Brother *Simon Peter*, and could not forbear imparting the joyful News to him that he had found the Desire of the World, and their long expected Happiness, the Christ who was promised by the Prophets, and carried him immediately to Jesus. *Peter* embracing the same Faith with his Brother, was no sooner come to Christ, but he admitted him to be one of his Disciples.

After our Lord's Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, when they chose among themselves by Lot, what part of the World each of them were to go unto, to Preach the Gospel of their Lord and Saviour, *St. Andrew* is said to have had *Scythia*, and the adjacent Regions assigned him for his Province, to which he travelled through *Galatia*; publishing the Tydings of Salvation in his journeying to the Gentiles. The first Place where he continued any time was *Amynsus*, from whence he went to *Trapezus*, and so from one place to another till he came to *Nice*, where he resided two

Years: From *Nice* he went to *Nicomedia*, thence to *Chalcedon*, and so through *Propontis*, and by the *Euxine Sea*, to *Heraclea*. At those places where he stay'd any time, he by his Preaching and Miracles, converted a great Number, Baptizing them into the Faith, and ordaining Ministers and Deacons among them: From *Heraclea*, he went to *Amestris*, from whence the Barbarous Usage which he met with from the People, occasioned him soon to depart. But far worse was his Treatment at *Sinope*, the birth and burial Place of the Famous *Mithridates* King of *Pontus*, which being inhabited by *Jews*, they were so enraged at his Doctrine, that they fell upon him with such Fury as he was carried out of the City for Dead, but recovering, he return'd thither again, and by the several Miracles that he wrought, brought many of them to a sense of their Errors, who afterwards treated him more Civilly.

At his first coming to this place, he met with his Brother *Peter*, who bore him Company for some time. From *Sinope* he returned to *Amyntus*, so to *Trapezus* and *Samsata*, the Birth-place of *Lucian*, in his Journey to *Jerusalem*; from whence after some short stay, he is said to return to his *Scythian* Provinces, and at *Sebastopole*, a City on the *Euxine* Shoar, preached to the Inhabitants with Success; from whence he removed to *Chersonesus*, a populous City within the *Bosphorus* of *Thrace*, whence he went back to *Sinope*, to confirm the Churches he had thereabouts planted, and some say, ordain'd *Philologus*, one of *St. Paul's* Disciples, Bishop thereof. From thence he journeyed to *Byzantium*, afterwards built by *Constantine*, and from his Name called *Constantinople*, where he is said to have founded a Church, and ordained *St. Paul's* beloved Disciple *Staches* first Bishop thereof. Being banish'd from this place by the then Governour, he fled to *Agripolis*, where he stayed two Years; then Travelling thro'

Thrace,

Thrace, Macedon, Thessaly, Achaia and Epirus, he settled at last at *Patra* a City of *Achaia*, where he sealed, with a resolute Martyrdom, the Verity of that Faith which he had Preached both here, and in so many other Countries and Places. The Book called *The Acts of St. Andrew's Passion*, said to have been writ by the *Achaian* Presbyters and Deacons who were present at his Execution, and which is also mentioned by *Philastrius*, an Author who lived in the Year 380, gives the following account of the Occasion of his Death. That this blessed Apostle boldly and freely applying himself to *Agras*, Proconsul of *Achaia*, who came to *Patra*, at the time of his being there, he endeavoured to persuade him to renounce his Heathen Superstitions and Idolatry, and to embrace the Worship of the true God; but instead of being convinced, the Proconsul was so enraged, that he became ten times more hardened in his Pagan Lewdness, and attempted by Perswasions, as well as Threats, to draw over this Apostle to Sacrifice to his Gods, and to renounce the Christian Religion, which he had so zealously Preached, to save his Life; but when he found him resolved rather to embrace Death, he committed him to Prison, from whence he was delivered by the People with an high Hand, who were somewhat mollified by his Doctrine. But being again brought before the Proconsul, and still continuing firm against all his Efforts, he was so incensed, that he proceeded to Sentence him to Death with great Fury, being exceedingly exasperated, because he had Converted to Christianity his Wife *Maximilla*, and his Brother *Stratulus*; his naked Body was then scourged by Seven of the *Lictors* one after another; and afterwards he was condemned not to be nail'd to the Cross, but tyed with Cords, to make his Death the more Lingring.

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In this Posture he is said to have hung two Days, and in that languishing Condition, to have exhorted the People to stand fast in the Faith which he had Preached to them. Being dead, his Body was taken down, and by order of the Proconsul's Wife, embalm'd and decently buried; but in the Year 357, it was removed by *Constantine the Great* to *Constantinople*, and buried in the Church he had built in Honour of the Apostles, remaining so incorruptible, as 'tis said, that in *Justinian's* Time, many Years after, his Body was found in a Wooden Coffin among the Rubbish, and with great Care Reposited in the former place. He suffered about the 95th Year after Christ's Birth, under the Persecution of *Domitian*.

His Festival is observed *November 30*. This is the Account that some Ancient Fathers give of *St. Andrew the Apostle*.

The

The Life of the Apostle St. *James the Great*,
who was Beheaded at *Jerusalem*.



ST. *James* Sirnamed *the Great*, either for his Age, or some particular Honours bestowed on him by our Lord, or else to distinguish him from *St. James the Less*, Bishop of *Jerusalem*, was born, some say, at *Capernaum*, others at *Bethsaida* in *Galilee*; He, with his Brother *St. John* the Evangelist, were both the Sons of *Zebedee* and *Mary*, Sirnamed *Salome*, whom the Gospel reckons among those Religious and Holy Women, who usually accompanied our Lord to Minister to him. It was she that desired of *Jesus* that her two Children might sit, the one on the Right-hand, and the other on the Left in his Kingdom, which she imagined would be Temporal, and might recompence the Voluntary Loss sustained by her Sons in following him. She was the

the Daughter of *Cleophas*, Sister, or rather Cousin German to *Mary* the Mother of our Lord. Whilst *St. James* was exercising of himself in his Father's Trade in the Sea of *Galilee*, our Saviour passing along the Shoar, seeing him and his Brother in a Ship busie about their Nets, called to them to follow him, and to be his Disciples, promising them to make them *Fishers of Men*. This Command they readily obeyed, and not long after were called to the Apostolical Office, and *John* with *Peter*, were admitted particularly to be present at several of our Saviour's grand Transactions. They were at the raising of *Jairus's* Daughter; at his Transfiguration; and were Spectators of his bitter Agony in the Garden. How *St. James* steer'd his Course after our Saviour's Ascension is variously Discoursed. Some say he Preached to the Converted *Jews*; but the *Spanish* Writers in general, though without Authentick Proof, affirm, That after the Martyrdom of *St. Stephen*, having Preached and Planted the Gospel up and down *Judea* and *Samaria*, he travelled into the Western parts of the World, meaning *Spain* and the *British* Isles, but more especially the former; yet whether he were a Traveller thither, or that his Ministry was continued to *Judea*, and the Parts thereabout, certain it is, that at *Jerusalem* we have the last Account of him, it being the place where not many Years after Christ's Death, he tasted the Cup of his Saviour's Passion, the first of all the Apostles.

The manner of his Sufferings was thus: *Herod Agrippa*, the Son of *Aristobulus*, and Grandson to *Herod* the Great, being made King of *Judea*, came down from *Rome* to his Government, and being desirous at his first Entrance into the Kingdom to ingratiate himself with the *Jews*, who mortally hated the Christians as they did their Master, he fell upon them, and would gladly have brought them

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them to the same end ; and St. *James* being the main Pillar of the rising Church, whose great Zeal in Preaching the Gospel had made him very odious, he resolv'd to ruin it at one Blow by seising upon him and beheading him ; so that his Zeal for Jesus Christ and his Truth, which raised him above all earthly things, was the cause of his Ruin in this Life, but the acquirement of Eternal Glory in that to come.

St. *Clemens* of *Alexandria* Relates a Memorable Story, which he received by Tradition from the Christians of his time ; That the Officer who apprehended and brought him before the Judges, seeing his undaunted Courage in bearing Testimony to the Truth of the Gospel, he himself became a Christian, and owning the Faith of Jesus, was condemn'd to be beheaded with the Apostle ; as they were led together to Execution, he begged Pardon of St. *James* for taking him ; who pausing a little to consider whether he should pardon, or acknowledge him for a Christian, who was not Baptized, God immediately revealed it to him by his Spirit, that Martyrdom supplies the want of Baptism, whereupon he embraced and kissed him, saying, *Peace be with thee*, and so they were Martyred together. As to the miraculous Passage of his Interment in *Spain*, we can only relate what is recorded by a Monk of the Abbey of *La Fleury* in *France*, but will not vouch for the Truth thereof : That when *Ctesiphon* was by the Apostles at *Jerusalem* design'd for *Spain* with the Ordination of Bishop, he with others his Assistants carried along with them the Body and Relicks of this Apostle in a Ship without Oars or Pilot : They landed at a Port in *Spain*, where after the Appearance of an Extraordinary Light from Heaven, the Body was on a sudden taken from them and conveyed to the place of its Interment.

Being

Being extremely troubled at so great a Loss, at their earnest Prayers, an Angel appeared and directed them to a place about Twelve Miles from the Sea, which being within the Jurisdiction of a Noble Woman, named *Luparia*, they desired leave to bury the Bones of the Apostle in her Territory, which she, being a bigotted Pagan, denyed with Contempt, Indignation and Curses. But upon their second Address, after their having destroyed a terrible Dragon that cruelly harrassed all the Country thereabout, and other Miracles, she was so convinced of the Truth of the Doctrine they preached to her, that she became a Christian, and turned all the Idol Temples into Churches of Religious Worship; and willingly permitted them to interr the Relicks of the Apostle.

From hence 'tis said the Bones were removed to *Compostella*, to which multitudes of Pilgrims resort Yearly. *Baronius* says, *This is the great Store-house of Miracles lying open to the whole World.* But this Relation is not inserted as Canonical, having no other Proofs but the Roman Legends, to which little Credit ought to be given.

The Death of *St. James* happened about Ten or Eleven Years after that of Christ. But the Divine Vengeance closely pursued *Herod* for shedding the Innocent Blood of this Holy Apostle; for going from *Jerusalem* to *Casarea*, as *Josephus* relates, to Celebrate Sports in Honour of *Cesar*, his Patron and Benefactor, he rid one Day to see the Shows, cloathed in such rich Robes of Gold and Silver, that by the Reflexion of the Sun they dazzled the Eyes of the numerous Spectators; and making an elegant Oration to them, his Flatterers extoll'd it as the Voice of God, and not of Man.

Herod, proud of such Encomiums, did not rebuke them, but was willing to believe himself more than a Man. But the Almighty, who can allow

allow no Rival, seeing this Arrogancy in an Enemy of his Gospel, immediately smote him by his Angel with an incurable Distemper, and he was devour'd of Worms, and so died.

The Festival of St. James is July 25.

The Life of St. Philip the Apostle, who was hanged up against a Pillar.



OF this Apostle there is not much Recorded in Holy Writ, but that he was born at *Bethsaida*, a Town upon the Bank of the Lake *Gennesareth*. Who his Father was is not deliver'd, but is generally believ'd to be also a Fisherman. He was a marry'd Man, and had several Daughters, and tho' the Cares of a Family engag'd him in Temporal Affairs, yet like a truly Pious Man, his main Care was for

for his Soul. He made it his daily Business to read the Law and the Prophets, by which means he soon came to the Knowledge of the true Messiah, the Hope of *Israel*. For the Day after Jesus Christ left the place where *John* was Baptizing, he went into *Galilee*, where he met *Philip*, and commanded him to follow him; he, whether instructed the Day before by *Peter* and *Andrew*, who were of the same Town, or whether he believed the Testimony of *St. John the Baptist*, who often declar'd openly, That *Jesus was the Lamb of God, that takes away the Sins of the World*, presently obeyed this Call. *Clemens Alexandrinus* says, he first desired to bury his Father, who was just then dead; but Christ reply'd, *Let the Dead bury the Dead*, denying him to go about a Business that so many others could do, when he was called to so great a work as Preaching the Gospel, and attending upon the Son of God.

Philip being receiv'd into the Number of Christ's Disciples immediately endeavour'd to make others so too, and *Nathaniel*, a Pious and Religious Man, being of his Acquaintance, who he knew would be joyful to hear News of the Messiah, he ran instantly to him, assuring him, that he had found him whom *Moses* and the Prophets had foretold should be the Saviour of the World, which was *Jesus of Nazareth* the Son of *Joseph*, and the Anointed of God; *Nathaniel* being prepossess'd by the Principles of the Jewish Teachers, much doubted whether he was the Christ, because he had been Taught, that no good thing could come out of *Nazareth*. *Philip* was not discouraged at this Incredulous Answer of his Friend; he only desir'd him to come and see Jesus, and by observing his Actions and Discourses, he would be fully satisfy'd that he was the Messiah. *Nathaniel* could not deny this Reasonable Request, and going to him, Christ at his first Approach, salutes him by the Name of an *Israelite* indeed, in whom
there

there was no Guile, and tells him that he saw him under the Fig-tree before *Philip* called him. *Nathaniel* surpriz'd at the Saying of *Jesus*, which declared him to be an all seeing God, the true knower of all hearts, gave up himself to the Faith, and saith *Rabbi*, or Master, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*. Then did *Philip* begin to convert others, before time could discover his own Conversion.

The Ancient Fathers are of Opinion, that *St. Philip* ever after this became a close Attendant upon our Saviour, and never left him. So that 'tis probable he was with *Christ* at the Marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, which *Jesus* and his Disciples were invited to three Days after. And the next Year when *Christ* chose Twelve of his Disciples to be Witnesses of his Miracles and Doctrines, and to be employ'd in great Services under him, whom he called Apostles, *Philip* was made one of them. After this, *Jesus* desirous to feed the Five Thousand Men that follow'd him out of Zeal, far from their own Homes, he, to try *Philip's* Faith, ask'd him, Where they should get Food sufficient for so great a Company? *Philip* considering more the Number of the Guests, than the hospitable Power of his Master, who had so lately turn'd Water into Wine, and could as easily turn Stones or Trees into Bread, betrayed his weakness of Faith, saying, *Two hundred pennyworth of Bread was not sufficient that every one should take a little*, signifying almost the impossibility of the thing; having, perhaps, not so much Money among them all, or if they had, could not procure Bread in such a Desert Place as that was. We read also, that *Philip* having told *Andrew* a little before *Christ's* last Passover, that certain Gentiles, who were come up to *Jerusalem* to worship at the Feast, having heard much of *Jesus's* Miracles and Preaching, were very desirous to see him. *Andrew* told *Jesus* of it. Some suppose, they were Gentiles of *Decapolis*,

Decapolis, Syrophenicia, and other bordering Countries, which joyning to Bethsaida, these People might have some Acquaintance with Philip, who was a Native, and a long Inhabitant there.

In the last Supper that Christ Celebrated with his Disciples, he told them for their Comfort, that he went to his Father to prepare Mansions for 'em, and at length to receive them to himself. *Philip* using the Liberty which Christ allow'd his Disciples, presently said, *Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*: We will never be troubled at whatever may befall us, but rest content with his Love to us, and his Care over us. Jesus reply'd smartly, *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me Philip?* who have convers'd with you so long, seen my Miracles, and heard my Doctrine; *For he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*: And therefore the Question was impertinent.

We have only probable Conjectures to what part of the World *St. Philip's* Lot fell; some write that *Upper Asia* was his Province, where he discharged his Apostolical Function successfully for many Years, after which he betook himself to *Hierapolis*, a Rich and Populous City of *Phrygia Pacatiana*; where finding the People besotted to the Adoration of a great Serpent or Dragon, partly by the Destruction thereof, which he procured by his earnest Prayers to Heaven, and partly by representing to them the stupidity of their Idolatry, he drew great Numbers to embrace the true Faith, which the Magistrates took so heinously, that they apprehended him, and having first Scourg'd him, he was either Crucify'd, or as some say, Hanged up by the Neck against a Pillar. It is added, That at his Execution the Ground where the People stood sunk under them; which when they seem'd to confess to be a Judgment upon them for their Sins, it suddenly stopp'd.

His

the Apostle.

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His dead Body being taken down was decently bury'd by his Sister *Mariamne*, his constant Companion in his Travels, and St. *Bartholomew* his Fellow-sufferer, but not executed at this time, being nailed to the Cross, such a sudden Fear possess'd the People, that they left him.

Some Authors say, he had two Daughters, St. *Hermione*, who was Martyred under *Adrian*, and *Eutichica*, who, they say, Converted many Virgins to the Faith, but on what Grounds we know not.

His Festival is upon *May 1.*

The

The Life of St. *Bartholomew* the Apostle,
who was Flea'd alive by the Command
of a Barbarous King.



THAT St. *Bartholomew* was one of the Twelve Apostles, is not to be doubted, tho' mention-
ed by a different Name : Some are of Opinion,
that his proper Name was *Nathaniel*, and that this
of *Bartholomew* was given him from his Father *Tho-*
lomeus, as St. *Peter* is called *Bar-jonas* ; but whe-
ther he was the same Person or no, 'tis more than
probable that he agreed in that great Character
which our Saviour gives of *Nathaniel*, That he was
an *Israelite indeed*, in whom was no Guile ; because
Christ, among all his Disciples, made choice of him
for that great Office of an Apostle. The place al-
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lotted him in the Catalogue of the Apostles, answers exactly to the calling of *Nathaniel*, which was just after *Philip*; and we can hardly imagine that our Blessed Lord should omit a Person so worthy of the Apostleship, both for the Integrity of his Life, and his early Conversion to the Faith in him; yet can no certain Conclusion be drawn from all this, that either *Bartholomew* or *Nathaniel*, were the same Person, or that *Nathaniel* was an Apostle.

That St. *Bartholomew* was of *Cana* in *Galilee*, the Evangelists record, and his Trade probably a Fisherman. He is scarce mention'd in the Holy Gospel, as to any thing said or done by him: He was contented with a silent Piety and humble Faith, and manag'd his Station soberly and prudently among the Apostolical Quire, in which we find him after our Lord's Ascension, joining with the holy assembly of Christians, devoutly praying and praising of God. And this is all that the Scripture speaks concerning him.

After the Holy Spirit descended upon them, it is probable, that he had a part in converting the world, but what Province was by divine appointment allotted to him, is no where certainly related. *Eusebius* says, that he Preached in the Country formerly call'd *India*, now *Arabia Felix*, and laid the first Foundation of the Christian Church there; and that St. *Pantenus*, a famous Stoical Philosopher, being converted to Christianity, was extream zealous in promoting the Faith; to which end he took a Journey into *India* two Years after, where he found the Gospel of St. *Matthew* written in *Hebrew*, and left among them by St. *Bartholomew*, to be an Improvement of the Faith he had taught them; however it were as to his remote Travels, yet he was at *Hierapolis* with St. *Philip*, where he narrowly escaped Martyrdom, from whence he went to *Lyconia*, where he preached with Success. His last and fatal Removal, and where he was put to Death, was *Albanopolis*, a City in *Armenia*,

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or rather *Cilecia*, for seeking to reclaim the Inhabitants from their gross Superstitions, he was laid hold on by the Magistracy, they not enduring he should go about to alter the Establish'd Religion, by the Command of the Barbarous King of that Country, he was Flea'd alive. Yet his Friends had Liberty to bury his Body, which is said to be remov'd to several Places, first to *Duras* a City on the Borders of *Perfia*, next to *Laparis*, our of the *Ionian* Islands near *Sicily*, where a stately Church was built in the Honour of him. From whence some report he was Translated to *Beneventum*, others to *Rome*, where he now rests in the Church of *St. Bartholomew* in the Isle of *Tiber*. But I shall not pursue it any farther, leaving that meritorious Work to those who account it a great piece of Religion to trace our Relicks and dead Bones, with as little Success many times as Profit. Upon this Apostle was fathered a spurious Gospel by certain Hereticks, for countenancing their own Opinions.

His Festival is upon *August 24.*

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The Life of St. Thomas the Apostle, who
was run through with Lances.



On the Birth and Parentage of this Apostle we have no account ; only we find in Scripture that his Sirname was *Dydinus*, which in Greek signifies a Twin, and *Thauma*, from whence *Thomas* is the same in *Hebrew*. *Eusebius* says, he was also called *Judas*, was a Jew, and probably a *Galilean*. Another affirms him born of mean Parents, and brought up a Fisherman ; but withal, well instructed in the Knowledge of the Scriptures. It is probable that he was an early Disciple, because in the second Year of Jesus's Ministry he was judged, by him that knew all Things, a fit Person, for his soundness of Faith and sufficiency of Knowledge, to be chosen one of his Apostles. His slowness of Belief

Belief in the manner of our Saviour's Resurrection, of which he would not be convinced 'till he had put his Hand into his Side, and his Fingers into the prints of the Nails, *St. Gregory* says, was more profitable to the Church, than the other Disciples Faith; because he thereby gave Jesus Christ an occasion to demonstrate, that the Resurrection of the Body is real by the most sensible Evidences of his Truth and Feeling; tho' he was afterward asham'd of his Incredulity, and cry'd out, *My Lord, and my God*; I acknowledge and believe that thou art my very Lord and Master, whom I followed and heard on Earth, and an Omniscient God: Jesus approving his Faith said, he had done well, because he had seen and believed, but that they do better, whose Faith is so strong, as having not seen yet believe.

After the Ascension of our Saviour, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, whereby they were furnished with Abilities to Preach the Gospel, *St. Thomas* was allotted to *Parthia*, as *St. Origen* reports, which then contained all *Persia*, and was so powerful an Empire, that they durst contend with the Roman Grandure; wherein were the *Medes*, *Persians*, *Carmanians*, *Hyrcanians*, *Bastrians* and *Magi*; and some write, that *St. Thomas* being come among the last, some of whose Countrymen came to worship Jesus at his Birth in *Bethlehem*, he converted and baptized many of 'em, whom he after sent abroad to Preach the Gospel in those large and populous Countries; it is also said, that he Preached in *Ethiopia*, and the *East-Indies*, as far as *Sumatra*, anciently *Toprobane*, and the Country of the *Brachmans*. The *Portugals* since their Travelling into those Parts, give an Account, that the Christians whom they found there, have a Tradition, That *St. Thomas* came to *Socatora*, thence to *Granganor*, and so forward, and having made some

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Progress there, in his Return came to the Kingdom of *Cormandel*, and at *Malabar* began a Church for his Converts, but was hinder'd by the idolatrous Priests, whose Profit was too great to part with their *Diana*, 'till *Sagamo*, the Prince of the Country, being convinced by the Miracles he wrought, not only suffered the Work to go on, but embraced the Faith, and by his Example multitudes of the People did the like.

St. Chrysostome says, that *St. Thomas*, though at first the most weak and incredulous, thro' Christ's Condescension to him, became the most ardent and invincible of all the Apostles, Travelling through most Parts of the World, and doing his Duty in the midst of barbarous Nations, without any Care of his own Security or Life. *St. Austin* speaks in several Places, of a Story of a Man that gave him a Box on the Ear, who being cursed by him was afterwards torn in pieces by a Lion. His Zeal for the Gospel of Christ hastned his Martyrdom; for the *Brachmans* doubting to lose their Trade by the introducing a new Religion, resolv'd to dispatch him. And knowing that he used daily to resort to a certain Tomb or Monument, to exercise his private Devotions, they went thither with some Armed Men, and finding him intent at Prayer, they poured upon him a shower of Darts and Stones, and then run him through with Lances. His Body was taken up by his Disciples, and decently bury'd in the Church he had built, which afterwards became a magnificent Structure. Some affirm, it was removed to *Edeffa* in *Mesopotamia*, but the Christians in those Parts deny it. The Donative given by King *Sagamo*, for building the Church, was inscribed on Brass Tables, which are said to have been brought to Don *Alphonso*, Viceroy of *India* under *John III.* King of *Portugal*; the Inscription being interpreted to him by a learned Jew.

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It is likewise reported That there was a Cross found in the Chappel of *St. Thomas* at *Malabar*, on which was an Inscription interpreted by a Learned *Bramin*; containing all the Passages concerning this Apostle, from his coming to *Malabar* to his Death in that place; and for Confirmation of what hath been said, the *Portugals* at their Arrival in those parts, found great Numbers of People, who called themselves *Thomas's* Christians, being very poor, and their Churches mean and plain, without any Pictures, or Images of Saints; or any other Representation but that of the Cross. They are under an High Priest, or Patriarch, to whom all the Christians of the East are subject, who hath his Seat at *Musal*. They have several unusual Rites and Customs among them. It is computed that *St. Thomas* suffered Martyrdom about the Year of Christ 66.

His Festival is Celebrated *December 21.*

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The Life of *St. James the Less*, whose Brains
were beat out with a *Fuller's Club*.



THIS Apostle was most probably the Son of *Joseph*, Husband to the Blessed Virgin, by his former Wife, who is recorded to be the Daughter of *Aggi*, Brother to *Zecharias*, Father to *St. John the Baptist*, whence he might well be reputed our Lord's Brother, since he himself was reckon'd the Son of *Alpheus*. It may be thought that *Joseph* was so called, as being of a particular Sect among the *Jews*, called *Alpheus*; and that it was common among the *Jews* to have more Names than one. *James* had his Sirname of *Less*, from the Stature of his Body, because he was a second *Zacheus*, and to distinguish him from *James the Son of Zebedee*, who was of great Height and Bulk, and was therefore

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called

called *Major*. But he got himself a more admirable Name (by his extraordinary Holiness, incomparable Faith, and exalted Wisdom) which was *James the Just*, by which he is still known over all the World.

After the Resurrection of our Lord he appear'd to him in particular, as is recorded by *St. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 7. *After that, he was seen of James, &c.* which is generally understood of this Apostle. *St. Jerom* from the *Nazarenes Hebrew Gospel*, in which are several Passages not found in the Evangelists, relates, That *St. James*, after he had drunk of the Cup at the Institution of the last Supper, made a solemn Vow, *That he would not eat any Bread again, 'till he saw the Lord risen from the Dead.* And that Christ as soon as he was risen appear'd to him, and commanded Bread to be set before him, took it, brake it, blessed it, and gave to *James*, saying, *Eat thy Bread, my Brother, for the Son of Man is truly risen from among them that sleep.* After our Saviour's Ascension he is said to be chosen Bishop of *Jerusalem* by the Apostles: And that the more careful he was in the Administration of his Office, the more inflamed was the Malice of the *Jews* against him, especially since they could not have their Will upon *St. Paul*, by reason *Festus* the Governour allow'd of his Appeal to *Cesar*; they therefore resolved to dispatch *James* before the Arrival of *Albinus* the New Governour, to which end *Annas* the High-Priest, of the Sect of the *Sadduces*, (the most cruel of all the Jewish Factions) suddenly calls a Council; before which the Apostle, with others, being summon'd, they are Arraign'd and Condemn'd as Infringers of the Law; but fearing to proceed with Violence against him, lest they should enrage the People, among whom were many Converts, the Scribes and Pharisees, who were subtle Dissemblers, came to him with specious Pretences, saying

saying, *That knowing him to be a just Man, they doubted not but he would join with them in rectifying the false Opinions the People had conceived, that Jesus was the true Messiah; and so going up with him to the Pinnacle of the Temple, that he might be seen and heard of all, they thus accosted him;*

Tell us, O Justus, since the People are so generally seduced with the Doctrine of Jesus, who was Crucified, what is thy Opinion of the Crucified Jesus? To which the Apostle with a loud Voice answered, Why do you enquire after Jesus the Son of God? He sits in Heaven, on the Right Hand of the Father on High, and will come again in the Clouds of Heaven. Hereupon the People below openly proclaimed Glory to Jesus, Hosannah to the Son of David.

The Learned Politicians thus disappointed, cried out that *Justus* himself was become an Impostor and Deceiver, and in a Rage threw him down from the Temple, which so bruised him that he miraculously escaped Death; but at length he recovered strength enough to get upon his Knees, and prayed for these his malicious Enemies, wherewith they being the more enraged, resolved to dispatch him with Stones, 'till one more mercifully cruel than the rest, to put an end to his Sufferings, beat out his Brains with a Fullers Club. This untimely and barbarous Death of St. James fell out the eighty-sixth Year of his Age, and Twenty-four Years after the Ascension of our blessed Lord. He was buried in the Place of his Martyrdom, near the Temple, where a Monument was erected, which remained a long time after; yet some affirm, he was interr'd in Mount *Oliver*, in a Tomb which he built for himself, and where he had caused *Zacharias* and Old *Simeon* to be intombed.

There is generally received as Authentick only one Epistle of his, supposed to be written by him a little before his Martyrdom, as having some Pas-

sages relating to the approaching Destruction of the Jewish Nation : It is directed to the Jewish Converts dispers'd up and down in the Eastern Countries, to comfort them in their Sufferings, and to confirm them in their Faith against the *Gnosticks*, and other Erroneous Opinions.

His Festival is kept *May 1.* with that of St. *Philip*.

The Life of St. *Simon* the Apostle, who was Crucify'd in *Persia*.



IT is generally granted, that *Joseph*, the Husband of the Virgin *Mary*, had four Sons by his first Marriage, one of which was named *Simon* ; but that this was the same *Simon* is not evident from any substantial Authority : Some, because he is called

Simon

Simon the Canaanite in the Catalogue of the Apostles, will have him to be of *Cana* in *Galilee*, where he lived, and first received the Faith, because it is evident all the Apostles were *Galileans*, and our Saviour did often converse thereabout; and in that very Town did the first Miracle he ever wrought; and *Nicephorus* seems to believe, that it was at the Marriage of *Simon* that he turned Water into Wine: Whereas, in truth, he was surnam'd the *Canaanite* rather from his Temper, which probably was hot and sprightly, than from his Country; *Canaanite* being in *Hebrew* what *Zelotes* is in *Greek*, which signifies Zeal; or else from a particular Sect among the Jews, called *Zealots*: But they hugely mistake, who will have him to be the same Person with *Simon*, the Son of *Cleophas*, who is said to be Successor in the Church of *Jerusalem* to *James* the Just.

There is very little spoken of *Simon* in the Gospel, more than that he was so eminent for his Faith and Charity, that our Blessed Lord chose him into the number of his Twelve Apostles, whom he intended should be chief Ministers and Witnesses of the Truths they had heard of him, and of the miraculous Actions they saw done by him. Some are of Opinion, that before his Conversion he was one of the Sect of the *Zealots*, who according to the Example of *Phineas*, that executed Punishment upon *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, took upon them the Power of punishing Offenders against the Law, without any formal Trial or Accusation. This Sect sprung up in the time of *Matthias*, (from whom issued the Family of the *Maccabees*) and continued among the Jews 'till our Saviour's time, who himself, in imitation of their Actions, drove the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, and overthrew the Tables of the Money Changers. He was very zealous for the Honour of his Master, and look'd upon all Christ's Enemies as really his own, how near soever

they were to him in any natural Relation, and shewed a very serious and pious Indignation towards those who professed Religion and the Faith of Christ with their Mouths, but dishonour'd that same Profession by their irregular and vicious Lives, as many of the first Christians really did.

After our Lord's Passion, St. *Simon* continu'd with the other Apostles and Disciples of Christ at *Jerusalem*; joyning in Worship and Communion with them, and did not leave that City 'till they had received the Holy Ghost upon the Feast of *Pentecost*; from which time being furnished with all necessary Gifts and Graces for the Ministry, they began to exercise it in all Parts of the World, whether the Holy Spirit and their own Prudence guided them. He is said to have preach'd the Gospel in *Egypt*, *Cyrene*, and several Parts of *Africa*; and that leaving those Countries, he went into *Lybia*, and *Mauritania*, and there exalted the Glory of Christ, not only by Preaching, but by a great number of Miracles which he wrought there. And lastly, that he came over to the Western Islands, and particularly to this Isle of *Great Britain*, and having Converted and Baptized great Multitudes to the Faith, and undergone a World of Troubles, Difficulties and Persecutions, he was put to Death by the Infidels, and buried there; being Crucify'd as his Saviour had been; and upon that Account welcomed his Death with incredible Joy and Courage: This Account is given by *Nicephorus*, though *Bede*, and other Authors in their Martyrologies say, That St. *Simon* suffered a glorious Death by the Idolatrous Priests at *Suanir*, a City in *Persia*, but where this is situated our Geographers do not mention, unless it should be the Place where the *Suani*, a People mentioned by *Pliny* and *Ptolomy*, dwelt, which they say was *Colchis*, and may agree with the Relation given us in the false History of St. *Andrew*, that

that in the *Cimmerian Bosphorus* there is a Tomb in a Grotto under Ground, with an Inscription, *That Simon the Zealot, or Canaanite, was buried there*: Yet this is all but Conjecture, and uncertain Proof, God having been pleased to conceal from us the Holy Actions and Lives of many of his choicest Servants, that we may content our selves to have our Religious Actions known to God only, and not, like the *Scribes and Pharisees*, love the Praise of Men.

His Festival is kept with St. Jude's, Octob. 28.

The Life of St. Jude the Apostle, who was shot to Death with Arrows.



ST. Jude or Judas, otherwise called *Thaddæus* or *Lebbus*, which Names were given him by the Traytor, or else to signify the Wisdom and Zeal where-

wherewith he was endued ; for St. *Jerom* says, that *Thaddeus* denotes a Person zealous in praising God, and *Lebbeus*, a Man of Wit and Understanding ; from whence *Jude*, as well as *Simon*, is termed a Zealot by the Ancient Fathers, who say he was famous for Zeal. He was Brother of *James the Just*, and consequently one of the Sons of *Joseph*, (Husband to the blessed Virgin) by a former Wife, *Judas* being the Name of one of the Four which he had, and is therefore call'd the Brother of our Lord. He was a marry'd Man, and had Children by his Wife nam'd *Mary*. He was chosen an Apostle in the Year of Christ 31, a little after the Passover ; and afterwards constantly attended upon our Saviour's Person and Ministry, and was probably more eminently zealous for the Faith of Christ than others.

After the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord he remained at *Jerusalem*, with the rest of the Apostles, worshipping God, and was present when they received the Gift of the Holy Ghost, of which he received a Portion suitable to his Place and Office. The Epistle bearing his Name, is placed the last of those seven which are call'd *Catholick*. It hath no particular Inscription as the other six, but is supposed to be chiefly design'd for the Christian *Jews* in their several Dispersions (as St. *Peter's* Epistles are.) He says, that at first he design'd to Write of the Common Salvation, and to confirm them in it ; but finding the Doctrine of Christ attack'd on every side, he thought it more necessary to appear in Defence of the Faith once delivered to the Saints ; and to oppose the False Teachers that endeavoured to corrupt it, by which he means the *Nicolaitans*, *Gnosticks*, the Followers of *Simon Magus*, and other Hereticks, who thought Faith without Works was sufficient for their Salvation.

Some of the Ancients have doubted, whether this Epistle was Canonical Scripture, because the
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Apocryphal Book of *Enoch* is cited therein : But *Eusebius* tells us, that in his time most Churches read it publickly ; and 'tis evident before the end of the Fourth Age, it was acknowledg'd in the Council of *Laodicea*, and *Carthage*, and by the most eminent Fathers, *Athanasius*, *Cyril of Jerusalem*, and others, to be Canonical ; and *St. Origen* says, it contains in a few Lines many Words full of Divine Power and Grace. *St. Jerom* relates, that *St. Jude* was sent by the rest of the Apostles to *Agbarus* King of *Edeffa* ; tho' *Eusebius* affirms, that *St. Thaddeus*, who went thither, was one of the Seventy Disciples : But the modern *Greeks* and *Latins* are bold to assert, that *St. Jude* preached in *Edeffa*, and throughout all *Mesopotamia*, compleating the Work of God which *St. Thaddeus* had begun. That he established the Faith in *Armenia* the Greater, and that those People have still a Tradition that he died in their Country. Others say he was buried in *Persia* with *St. Simon*. It is also related, that some of the Apostles, who preached the Gospel, did also labour in Husbandry, to maintain themselves in the Work of the Ministry, thereby to prevent their being chargeable to their new Converts, and by that means encouraging them to embrace the Faith of Christ, and that *Jude* was one of these. He liv'd 'till about the Year of Christ 62, which was a little after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. Some Authors relate that he dy'd at *Berytus* ; but others say, that travelling into *Persia*, after having had good Success in his Ministry for many Years ; at last for inveighing against the superstitious Rites of the *Magi*, he was, by their Suggestion and Contrivance put to a most cruel Death ; which, 'tis said, was by being ty'd to a Stake, and shot to Death with Arrows, which made him long a dying. His Feast is Celebrated with *St. Simon's*, *Octob. 28*. His Body is said to be
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in St. Peter's Church in Rome, and a Gospel is attributed to him; but both have little Credit given to them.

Eusebius reports, That St. Jude had two Grand-Children which were Christians, who having about Forty Acres of Land, Till'd it with their own Hands, thereby maintaining their Families, and paying the Heavy Taxes laid upon the Jews by *Domitian*. This Emperor in the Year of Christ 95, rais'd a second Persecution against the Church, and commanded that all the Posterity of *David* should be put to Death; he, like *Herod*, fearing Christ should come, and take away his Kingdom; because the Christians magnify'd his Power and Greatness so much, calling him their Lord and King. Hereupon these two Men were accus'd to *Domitian* as of the Posterity of *David*, and near akin to Christ: Being brought before him, he enquired of them concerning the Condition of their Ancestors; and also about the Messiah and his Kingdom; to which they answered particularly, with much sincerity and freedom; telling him, their Father was a labouring Man, and that the Messiah was a King in Heaven, and not upon Earth, where his Kingdom should not appear 'till the End of the World, when he should come in his Glory to judge the Living and the Dead. *Domitian* hereupon despis'd their Poverty, and judging them innocent Persons, set them at Liberty; and *Tertullian* says, he immediately ceased any further Persecutions of the Christians. Those two Persons were afterward much honoured and esteemed, as the Kindred of Jesus Christ, and as Martyrs; which Title the Church gave to all who had born publick Testimony to the Truth, though they did not suffer Death for the same.

The Life of *St. Matthias* the Apostle, who
was stoned to Death.



OF the Parentage and Birth-place of this Apostle, we have no Account in Scripture, or elsewhere, farther than that he was a Jew ; for our Saviour being sent only to the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*, admitted none to be his Disciples but true *Israelites* ; he certainly became an early Convert to Christianity, otherwise he could not have been sufficiently qualify'd for that great Office to which he was afterwards elected ; and indeed *St. Peter* in effect tells us, *Acts* 1. 22, 23. that he was one of those Disciples who had been a Continual Hearer and Attendant upon Christ, all the Time of his Ministry, after he had been Baptiz'd by *John* in *Jordan*, 'till his Death and Ascension. He

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was Elected into the Apostolick Office after our Lord's Ascension, by the rest of the Apostles, in the room of *Judas*, who being seized with Despair for betraying his good Master, *the Lord of Life*, hanged himself, and thereby made a Vacancy in the College of the Apostles. After the Dispersion of the Apostles to the several Countries allotted them for Preaching of the Gospel, *Matthias* having spent some time in *Judea*, 'tis fabled of him that from thence he went into *Macedonia*, where he escaped the Effects of a poysonous Cup given him on an Experiment; and that to evidence the Truth of his Doctrine he cured 150 Persons who had drank of the same Cup before. It is more evident that he Travelled Eastward, and at length came to *Ethiopia*: In his Travels he met with many Troubles and Difficulties, and fell among a sort of barbarous and untractable People; however, he by the Power of Truth converted many of them to the Faith of Christ. An ancient Martyrology relates, that he was apprehended for a Blasphemer by the Jews, and by them stoned to Death. For having by his Doctrine and Miracles in *Palestine* converted a great Number to Christianity, *Aramus* the Younger, High-Priest to the Jews, having put *James the Less* to Death, apprehended *Matthias* at the same time in *Galilee*, to whom he made a long Speech: But finding the Apostle, contrary to his Exhortation and Persuasion, confessing Jesus of *Nazareth* to be the true Messiah, he condemn'd him to be Stoned, and the Sentence was immediately executed. Some Authors say, that his Body having been kept a long time at *Jerusalem*, was Translated thence by *Helena*, the Mother of *Constantine the Great*, to *Rome*, where some parts of his Corps are shew'd at this Day with great Veneration. Others report, that they were brought to *Triers* in *Germany*.

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Clemens Alexandrinus relates this Saying of his :
 ' That we ought to mortify and subdue the Flesh,
 ' and maintain a continual Opposition to it, grant-
 ' ing it nothing, whereby its irregular and sensual
 ' Desires may be gratify'd ; but that we should on
 ' the contrary continually Nourish and Fortify our
 ' Souls with Faith and Divine Knowledge.

His Festival is Celebrated *Feb. 27.*

The Life of *St. Paul* the Apostle, who was
 Beheaded by the Command of *Nero*, the
Roman Tyrant.



S *T. Paul*, though he was not one of the Twelve
 Apostles, yet for his great Eminency in the
 Ministry of the Gospel had justly that Honour con-
 ferred upon him : He was Born at *Tarsus*, of an
 Ancient Jewish Family, of the Tribe of *Benjamin* in
Judea,

Judea, and had his Education in that City, which was then a more flourishing Academy than *Athens* and *Alexandria*. In the Schools of *Turfs* he was Educated from his Child-hood in all the Polite Learning of the Ancients ; yet at the same time he was brought up to a manual Trade, as even the Learnedst of their Rabbies were : It being a Maxim among the *Jews*, *That he who taught not his Son a Trade, made him a Thief*. For Learning of old was not made an Instrument to get a Maintenance by, but for the better polishing the Mind, so that the Rabbies were demonstrated from their Trades, as Rabbi *Judah* the Baker, Rabbi *Jochannan* the Shoemaker, and *Paul* was a Tent-maker, and being a great Proficient under *Gamaliel*, he became a strict Professor of the Sect of the Pharisees, who were generally great Applauders of their own Sanctity, and Despisers of all others as Reprobates, and unworthy of their Society ; and our Apostle was too deeply infected with the Genius of this Fiery Sect ; so that when the Blood of the Martyr *Stephen* was shed, *I* (saith he with Sorrow after his Conversion) *was standing by, and consenting unto his Death, and kept the Rayment of them that slew him*. Nay, of all the Apparitors and Inquisitors, approved by the Sanhedrim to execute their Warrants upon these Upstart Hereticks, as they called them, who Preached against the Law of *Moses* and the Tradition of the Fathers, he was the Man that strove to be the forwardest. In this Zeal, as he was in the way to *Damascus*, to execute his Office, with some other Zealots, breathing out Vengeance and Destruction against the Innocent Christians ; and on a sudden a glorious Light darted out upon them, so that they fell to the Ground in great Amazement ; and at the same time a Voice from Heaven was directed to him, saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?* To which, as amazed as he was, he answered, *Lord, who art thou ?*

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The Voice replied, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.* He again ask'd, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Upon which he was bid to rise, and go to *Damascus*, and there expect what should further be revealed to him; rising from the Ground, he found he was blind, and continued Three Days Fasting, and probably he had then the Cœlestial Vision mentioned by him, wherein he heard and saw Things past Utterance; and had those Divine Revelations which gave him occasion to say, that the Gospel which he preached he was not taught by Man, but he had it revealed to him by Jesus Christ. After three Days *Ananias*, one of the Seventy Disciples, came to him by the Command of the Lord, and having laid Hands upon him, his Sight was restored to him, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost conferred on him; presently after he was Baptized, and made a Member of the Church, to the great Joy of the rest of the Disciples, that he should become not only a Professor, but a Preacher of that Faith, which he so lately was a bitter Persecutor of. He afterwards grew more Eminent for his Preaching, Epistles, Travels and Persecutions, than any one of the Apostles; all which are at large declared in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and his several Epistles, and are briefly summ'd up by himself, 2 Cor. II. against the Reproaches of some Teachers which envied him, saying; 'Are they *Hebrews*? So am I. 'Are they the Seed of *Abraham*? So am I. Are 'they Ministers of Christ? I am more. In Labours 'more abundant; in Stripes above measure; in 'Prisons more frequent; in Deaths often. Of the 'Jews Five times received I Forty Stripes save one. 'Thrice was I beaten with Rods; once was I Stoned. Thrice I suffered Shipwreck; a Night and 'a Day have I been in the Deep. In journeying 'often, in Perils of Waters, in Perils of Robbers, 'in Perils by my own Country men, in the Perils
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‘ of the City, in Perils in the Wilderness, in Perils in the Sea, in Perils among False Brethren. In Weariness and Painfulness, in Watchings often, in Hunger and Thirst, in Fastings often, in Cold and Nakedness.

Having in these and many other Instances served God and his Church in the Gospel of his Son; about the ninth Year of *Nero*, he suffered Martyrdom; and tho’ being a Roman Citizen, he ought to have had the Privilege of being Try’d by the Roman Law; yet *Nero*, a Person whom Lewdness and Debauchery had made seven times more a Pagan than any Custom or Education could have done, had so implacable an Hatred against Christians, that he would endure no Apology on this Behalf. Long had this blessed Apostle desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, as being a more preferable Portion; but he waited God’s Appointment, and *June 29.* in the Year of Christ 66, being of a great Age, he embraced Death as a welcome Guest, just at the same Hour as it was foretold him; he was beheaded at *Aqua Salvia*, and interr’d at *Via Ostiensis*, 3 Miles from *Rome*, where *Constantine the Great* afterward built a sumptuous Church.

His Festival is Celebrated, *June 29.*

The Life of St. *Barnabas*, the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, who was Stoned by the *Jews* at *Salamis*.

THIS Apostle was of the Tribe of *Levi*, and became a Disciple of Christ in his Life-time, and is said to be the Chief of the 70 Disciples; he had an Estate in the Isle of *Cyprus*, and after our Lord’s Ascension, seeing the necessities of the Church required it, he sold it, and brought the whole Price of

of it to the Apostles, to be dispos'd by them as they should think fit, to the most Indigent and Wanting, all the Christians at that time doing the like, none of them keeping their Plenty to themselves; but imparted whatever they had to their indigent Brethren, having all things in common; but *Barnabas* is particularly remarkable as the most eminent Example, because his Estate being much larger than any of the rest, he gave the first Example of Charity and Bounty to the Church. He was first named *Joses* or *Joseph*, and the name of *Barnabas* signifies the Son of Consolation, was given him by the Apostles, because he had a singular Gift, and special Art in comforting the Weak; for the Scripture represents him to be a Person of a mild, easy, and compassionate Temper, very courteous, and inclinable to pardon, yet withal of a very Awful, and Majestick Countenance, begetting Reverence and Respect.

After the Sale of his Estate, he settled his Abode at *Jerusalem*, whither *St. Paul* coming three Years after his Conversion, the Apostles would not admit him into their Society; having heard of his fierce Zeal against the Christians, whose very Name was a Terror to them. But *Barnabas* having a greater Confidence of his Sincerity, knowing him to be a good Man, brought him to the Apostles, informing them that he was satisfy'd, he was fully reclaim'd from his persecuting and misguided Zeal, being converted by Christ himself, who appeared to him in the Way as he went to *Damascus*, and reprov'd his Mad-ness, and ordered *Ananias* to instruct him in his Mysteries of Christianity. *Barnabas's* Relation found Credit with the Apostles, and *Paul* was accepted into their Communion, where he exercised his Ministry for some time, asserting to the Jews, that Jesus was the Messiah; by which he so much incensed the *Hellenist Jews* in a Disputation with them, that

that they contrived to put him to Death. About Five Years after some Christian *Jews*, who were driven from *Jerusalem* by the Persecution raised about *St. Stephen*, went down to *Antioch*, and Preached the Gospel to the *Jews* of that City, Converting many, not only of them, but even of the Heathen to the Faith, by their Preaching and Miracles. The Apostles at *Jerusalem* gladly hearing of the Conversion of so great a City, yet being sensible that the Ministers of it were neither of their most holy nor knowing Men, but such as their Zeal had put upon so good a Work, sent down *Barnabas* to *Antioch*, to set things in order, who upon his coming, beheld with Joy the great Success of the Gospel among them, and by exhorting them to persevere in the Faith and Doctrines of Christ with a pure Heart, he increased the number of Believers.

St. Barnabas was a Prophet and Teacher, to whom the Council of the Apostles give this Commendation, That he was a Man who had hazarded his Life for the Name of the Lord Jesus, and had entirely given up himself to the Labour of Preaching the Gospel. He afterwards fetch'd *Paul* to *Antioch*, to help forward the Conversion of that City. He, with *Paul*, carry'd the Alms of the Christians of *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*. They are sent to Preach to the Gentiles, and upon some difference about Circumcision are separated, but were afterward fully reconciled : After which *St. Paul* took *Salas* along with him, and went into *Syria* and *Cilicia* to Confirm the Churches ; and *Barnabas* took *Mark*, and sailed to *Cyprus* ; they retaining their Christian Charity and Love both to one another, and to the Souls of the Brethren, tho' they went into distant Regions one from another : This is all the Scripture mentions of *St. Barnabas* : Other Authors say, he continued to his Lives End
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in *Cyprus*, but Preached the Gospel in other Places ; that he returned to *St. Paul* again, and was sent by him to *Corinth* along with *Titus*. But however that be, 'tis clear, that *St. Paul* speaks of him as his Companion, and Fellow-Labourer, in the Gospel still, and as very dear to one another. If it be the Author of the Epistle that now goes under his Name, he must have lived 'till after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which was in the Year of Christ 70. He is said to have suffer'd Martyrdom, being stoned to Death by the *Jews* at *Salamis*, and to have been bury'd within a quarter of a Mile of that City. Some have attributed to him a Gospel full of Fables ; the Acts of *Barnabas*, which bear the Name of *John Mark* his Cousin, is of the same kind, being stuff'd with Forgeries and Impertinencies.

His Festival is Celebrated, both by the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, upon *June 11*.

F I N I S.

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